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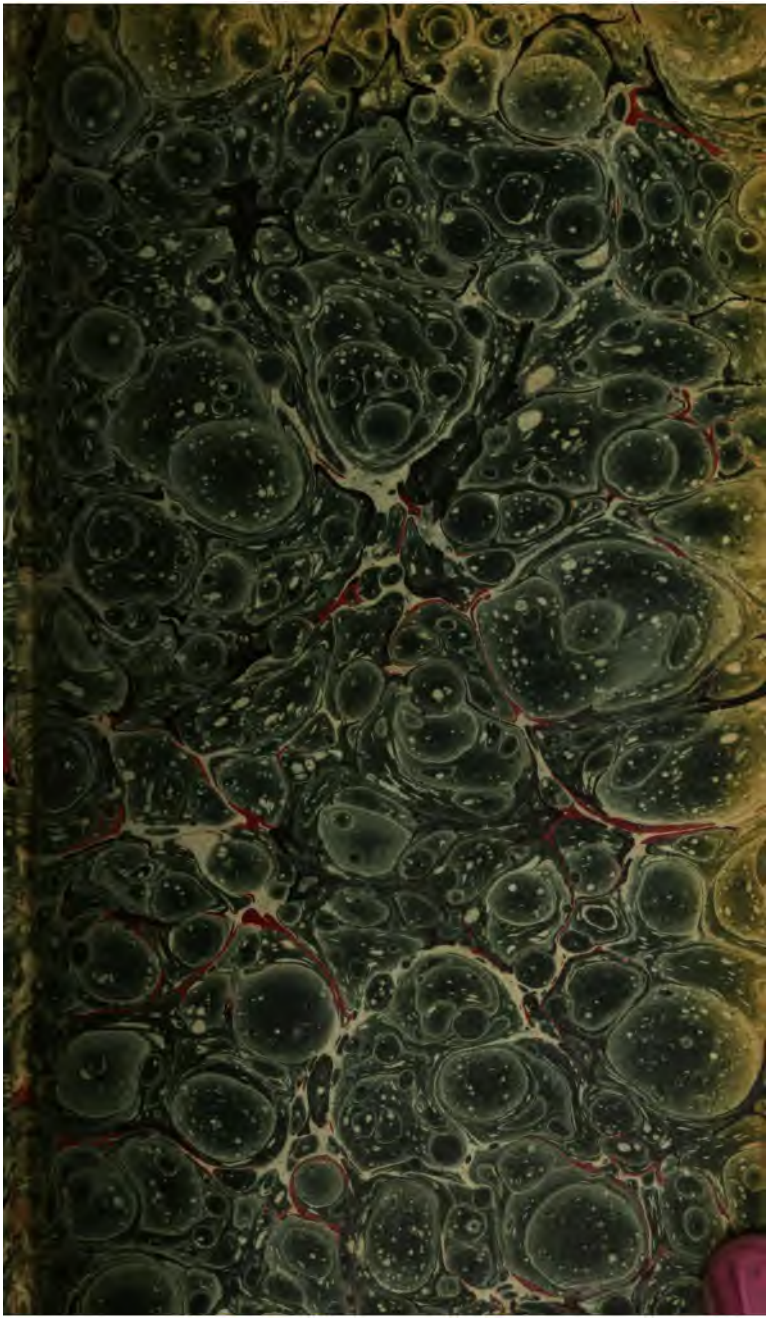

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Isabella Baker

Galt, John

ROTHELAN;

A ROMANCE OF

THE ENGLISH HISTORIES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

ANNALS OF THE PARISH, RINGAN GILHAIZE,
THE SPAEWIFE, &c.

Some people would impose now with authority
Turpin's or Monmouth Geoffrey's Chronicle.
LORD BYRON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

EDINBURGH:
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AND
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1824

ROTHELAN.

PART III.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

A HOLIDAY.

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ROTHELAN.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

A HOLIDAY.

How London doth pour out her citizens!
The mayor and all his brethren in best sort;—
Like to the senators of the antique Rome,
With the plebeians swarming at their heels,
Go forth and fetch their conquering Cæsar in.

SHAKSPEARE.

In opening the Third Part of the story of Rothelan, the omissions of the Chronicler render it necessary to borrow assistance from the imagination of the courteous reader. Six years are supposed to have elapsed, during which King Edward had several rough en-

counters in France; in which the Black Prince had won the battle of Cressy, and the French king, in order to draw off the English forces from the siege of Calais, had instigated David, king of Scotland, to invade England.

In the meantime the little prankful page has grown into a bold youth, tempered for the stroke of war, in the vicissitudes of many a Border foray, under the redoubted Sir Gabriel de Glowr. But as our authority has not recorded any of the incidents of that soldierly education, the reader, as we have said, must supply the defect from the stores of his own fancy, and picture to himself the effect of the borderers joy of speed and spoil on a gallant stripling rising eighteen, ambitious of honour, and panting for renown.

When the Scottish king, at the instigation of his French ally, a second time invaded England, it appears that Sir Gabriel de Glowr, remembering no doubt the mischief of his former adventure, joined the royal army,

and carried Richard with him. It is not however very clear how this was arranged, nor by what persuasion the young soldier, who must forget his English origin, was induced to take up arms against his own country. But the fact admits of no controversy; for he was undoubtedly along with his commander at the battle of Neville's Cross, that same battle in which David II., with so many of his knights and nobles, was taken prisoner, and the account which the Chronicler gives of the return of the victors seems a prelude to his own appearance in the story. As they advanced southward, the whole population of the surrounding country is described as going forth to meet them. When it was known in London that the army had reached St. Alban's, the citizens simultaneously determined to welcome them as with the honours of a Roman ovation. The mayor and aldermen, with the train-bands, arrayed with battle-axes and hammers, and the clergy

and friars, with crosiers and censers, and all the wonted paraphernalia of ecclesiastical pomp and pageantry, prepared themselves to receive them in the fields beyond the city walls. From the first opening of the gates in the morning, the general multitude of the inhabitants, in their holiday clothes, and wearing boughs of oak in their caps, accordingly formed one continued stream flowing onward from the Bishopsgate to Barnet. The fronts of all the houses, along the sides of the road, were adorned with garlands and green branches. Every window was filled with clusters of fair and blooming faces, not unmeetly compared to bunches of gathered roses,—all was gratulation, and pride, and gayety; THE GREAT HEART OF ENGLAND had indeed just cause to be proud and boastful, for the Londoners, on the earliest news of the Scottish invasion, had manfully banded themselves, and were the earliest to take the field,—a circumstance which so exalted the loftiest fan

of the city, that, together with the extraordinary success of the war, and the achievements of his kinsmen and companions, he would not have brooked, in his triumphant arrogance that day, a comparison of equality with the loftiest noble in any other realm of the earth.

Nor were the details of this great festival less characteristic of the nation, than the general bustle and freedom of the show; for, to fill up the time till the arrival of the army, every one, according to his peculiar taste and habits, betook himself to indulgence or recreation. The inns and alehouses resounded with mirth and minstrelsy; and booths decorated for signs, with attempts at the portraiture of popular warriors—the likenesses of which were considerably improved by the addition of their names—were baited with massy displays of good cheer to entice in the merriest order of customers. Portly hosts, and their blither dames, with the pert pot-boys and nimble tapsters, were all in their

blue azure; it was, however, remarked of them, that they were somewhat more sharp and peremptory to their guests than accorded with the wonted suavity of their demeanour. But this was owing entirely to the extraordinary stir in their business, which left them no time for courtesies,—an important fact, which we thus carefully record, because the hearty vintners and victuallers of England have, in all ages, been ever amongst the most forward of her patriotic children, whether the occasion were a triumph on the hustings, or a victory by flood or field.

While the slouched and the slovenly, with lean and sallow faces, and dark, keen, unsettled eyes, wrangled at skittles and toss-my-luck, and bent eagerly over the hop-my-fool tables, the spruce apprentices and jolly young artisans danced with their smart sweethearts to the sound of the pipe and tabor. In the elaborate arbours, thriving shopkeepers and thrifty tradesmen, with their wives and chil-

dens, privately enjoyed the cool retirement of the fragrant maple bowl, mantling with elder wine; and here and there, close and apart, under the shade of some spreading elm, the Lombardines and Brabanters, then the principal bankers and merchants of London, sat with their ladies on Levantine carpets, and by their own knaves, or the footmen, were in those days called, were served with buttered cakes and comfits, and occasional goblets of cooled hippocras, malmsey, and muscadel. But few of the nobility were present, for all the flower of the kingdom were either abroad with the royal army in France, or were among the victorious soldiers, whom so many thousands of every other class and order of the community had assembled to welcome home.

But that joyous and gratulating spirit was not universal; the friends and kindred of those who had gone to the wars, were easily distinguished as they moved to and fro, anxious and apprehensive. Many an old man, with

"Is it good news, or good ale, father gray-beard?" said the horseman, affecting a more jovial address than suited his complexion, "that puts thee into such capers?" and he added, as if quickened by some sudden recollection, "as I live, honest Pigot?"

"Honest he is, as God and his conscience know, and that's more than one of them knew of thee," replied Pierce hastily; but in the next moment his eye caught the stranger's, and he immediately became grave, and turned away as if to avoid him.

"Don't you know me?" said the horseman, following him.

Pigot again looked up at the corner of his eye, and replied, "I have seen your face, but I don't recollect it for its beauty," said he added, muttering, but loud enough to be heard, "nor for any good either."

"How is this, Pierce? we used to be friends, why should we not again?"

and a rushing forward of the multitude soon announced that the advanced guard of the army was in sight. The old man instantly darted through the thickest of the throng, and threaded his way so nimbly, that he was speedily lost to the view of his old acquaintance, who appeared to hesitate whether he should follow or remain, till the torrent of the people so beset him on all sides, that his horse became unmanageable, and was tossed about like a boat on a whirlpool. As soon, however, as he could make his way through the crowd, he clapped spurs to his horse, and as he passed the numerous groups of spectators, who stood along the road-side, and in the gaps of the hedge-rows, he little heeded their clamorous and importunate questions, but galloped to the town.

CHAPTER II.

FAMILY SECRETS.

"Between two worlds life hovers like a star
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge;
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge,
Lash'd from the foam of ages, while the graves
Of empires heave but like some passing waves."

BYRON.

THERE are times and seasons, says our author, when sympathy, which is the eye of the mind, hath a strange discernment of the mysteries of the supernal world, and the spirit of the present holds solemn communion with the inheritors of hereafter. Such apocalypse, he quaintly adds, is wont to chance, when the rueful meditant sits companionless beside a drowsy lamp, with an open book before him,

whereof the spells have become powerless, to enchant his attention. Then the Past is usherer to the Future, and Memory coming forth from the silent doors of her pictured chamber, expounds the oracles of prophecy, instructing the melancholy man, that as his fortunes have been, so will they continue to be. The stream of life, however various its course, rolls onward with the same waters.

With mournful moralities, in this vein, the lady of Sir Amias de Croshy, says the Chronicler, was often wont to discourse with her daughter, who, at that period of which we are now speaking, had attained her seventeenth year, adorned with a loveliness that was rather of the lily than the rose. From the fatal time in which that pure and noble lady distrusted the integrity of her husband, sorrow infected her spirit, and she had waned into a pale and passionless resignation, that more more of the impress of another world than was ever seen in any mortal malady.

Beatrice was standing by the couch on which her mother was reclining, endeavouring, with all manner of gentle persuasion, to entice her abroad to see the triumphal welcome of the army, thinking that the sight of so much joy and rejoicing would rouse her spirit from its habitude of musing and solemnity; but without effect.

"If you desire, my child," said her mother, "to look at the pageant, and the curiosity accords with your years, your father will go with you; but, for me, I am weary of all things—the sight would but increase my sadness. It is, sweet Beatrice, with all its pomp and heraldry, but a funeral. They are all on their way to the grave."

"Something has chanced," replied Beatrice, "which disturbs my father; Ralph Hanslap went out in the morning to meet the army, and returned in great haste; and my father, with whom he has been, appears since uneasy, and singularly troubled."

The Lady de Grosby trembled herself at these words upon her knee, and turning to her daughter, said hastily—

"There is but one thing that can vex him at this time; I pray to heaven it may be that."

"Why should you so desire that he may be troubled?" replied Beatrice, wondering at the unaccustomed energy and eagerness of her mother, and at a prayer so strange and uncharitable.

"Sit down, my child," said the lady; "the time has come when I may tell you the cause of my long silence;" and she then recounted the story of the Lady Albertine, to the period of her sudden flight from Grosby-House, without, however, allowing a word to escape that indicated the secret opinion she had formed of Sir Amias; for she would not impair the love and reverence which the child cherished for her father.

"It is a mournful tale," said Beatrice pen-

Lady Albertina, and nothing ever [illegible]
of the child [illegible]

"It was thought," replied the Lady de Crosby, "that she had retired to her own country; but some months ago, at the beginning of the last football year, when the King went to the north, she was seen in London, making inquiries of a Jew.

That Jew brought to your father a boy, whose beauty and the luxury of his apparel caused much talk here among our servants."

"And was he the Lady Albertina's son?"

"He was not then so thought; but your father, on the Jew's persuasion, promised him to be entertained as the page of the Lord [illegible]

"What afterwards became of the boy?"

"That the Jew has the seed of my corn."

After the King had returned to Westminster, [illegible]

your father concerning the page, but he was then abroad with Ralph Hanslap. They went away suddenly, and staid several years—for what cause I never knew."

"There is something," said Beatrice with a sigh, "that I cannot see in this matter—but what befell the boy?"

"The Lord Mowbray, finding your father had passed across the seas, requested to see me; and after some questioning, by which he saw that I was none informed regarding the page, told me, that, much to his discomfort, the child had been lost at York; and of a singular accident by which it was discovered that he was in the hands of the Scots, adding, that the King had been willing to have him ransomed, and had for that purpose sent a pursuivant to Scotland, but without profit. Now your father and Ralph Hanslap, at that juncture in the fortunes of the boy, left England."

"Alas!" said Beatrice with a sigh, looking

at the same time with apprehension at her mother, "you fear that there is some mystery in these adventures that concerns my father's honour?" And she then exclaimed,—"But I never liked Ralph Hanslap; he hath too much sway with my father."

The Lady took hold of her daughter's hand, and pressed it to her lips, saying,—"My sweet Beatrice, it is meet that you should hope your father may not be in fault; and I trust you will yet persuade him to make atonement," adding faintly, "if there is aught to be repented."

"But you said," rejoined Beatrice, "that the Lady Albertina was not married to my uncle?"

"Your father so told me."

"Think you that the Lord Mowbray's page was my cousin?"

"I cannot reason myself into any other belief."

"Could not the Jew tell?—Have you

ever questioned him? Has any father ever questioned him?

"Be patient, and I will be more plain, for I would now have you to use all the pith of your affection to make your father redeem his honour, by redressing the great wrong which I fear he has done to the widow and the orphan."

"Then you are persuaded that the lady was indeed my uncle's wife?"

"I am."

For the space of two or three minutes, Beatrice sat in a state of wonderment, and then bursting into tears, said,—

"Where is that unfortunate lady? I will bring her to my father."

"You are too eager, Beatrice. The name of your father is without stain;—will you I taint it?—Seek not to convict him by any witness, but make him, if you can, the voluntary vindicator of his own honour. I have lately seen the Lady Alberting in Aber-

jah the Jew she found a friend in her utmost need;—by him she has traced her son. He is among the Scottish prisoners, and is doubtless now coming to London with the army."

"Does my father know all this?"

"I doubt not, from what you have said, that Ralph Headley has learnt something to that effect."

"Did not you speak with him of my cousin?"

"Never; since the Lady Albertine quitted this house, I have not once mentioned her name nor heard it."

"And yet it would seem that you communicate with her."

"Accident lately brought us together in St. Helen's church. She is much changed; I scarcely knew her—but after so long an absence we embraced as sisters,—such indeed we had always been,—and we have since daily met in the same place. She has told me all the story of the fatherly Adonijah. I

trouble for the shame that may fall upon your father when her son returns."

"And yet you give him no warning. Alas, madam, is that kind?"

When I had no cause to question my influence with your father, I did all within my power to arrest him from rushing to the danger he has incurred; but sin was stronger with him than my love,—and we have since been wofully estranged. You, Beatrice, however, may yet save him; and I beseech you to use only gentleness."

While they were thus speaking, the rising shouts of tumultuous exultation announced the approach of the army, and the noise continued to increase till every other sound was lost in the cheers of the multitude. The delicate frame of the Lady de Crosby was shaken, and she laid herself along on the couch, while Beatrice retired to another chamber that looked into the street, where she found her father standing at an open window, viewing

the procession with a degree of wildness and anxiety in his countenance that but ill accorded with the universal joyfulness which reigned without.

CHAPTER III.

A DAUGHTER.

My father's ill wi' a maladie,
And he sits and sighs despondentlie;
He hears, but he'll no answer me;
O, what's come o'er my father?

PETER M'GLASHAN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the refinement and taste of the ancients, they were certainly a gross and sensual race. Among all the allegories of their mythology and polytheism, they had no idol-representative of affection—that peculiar sentiment which we hold to be the discriminative quality of the modern mind, as compared with the spirit of antiquity. By what image it might be appropriately expressed we shall let the academicians determine; we have only adverted to the subject by

chancing to observe, in the illuminated capital of that chapter, of which we now intend to give the substance, a beautiful little Cupid with his wings tied, and a pair of spectacles on "his innocent nose;" and we suspect he is placed there, in that guise, as the emblem of the faithful domestic, Love, which is made up of kindness and tenderness, without the admixture of any passion; for the author commences the account of what passed between Sir Amias and his daughter, by stating that Beatrice saw not the faults of her father; but such was her filial reverence, that the courtesies of his manners seemed to her like the brightest and fairest virtues.

They stood together at the window for some time without speaking. While the knight kept his eyes eagerly and searchingly fixed on the long array of warriors and captives passing below, she often turned her's anxiously towards him; for she saw, by the way in which he ever and anon wrung his hands and fetched his

breath, as it were, in blasts, that his spirit was struggling with an overwhelming alarm. At last, she remarked that he suddenly became calm, if a pause in his agitation may be so described, and that he then bent earnestly forward. She followed the direction of his eye, and saw Ralph Hanslap in the street, and near him an aged Jew, with a lady in a lawn veil, leaning on the Jew's arm. It was Adonijah and the Lady Albertina.

The attention of that group appeared engaged with the procession; but something in the distance, not seen from the window, suddenly awakened in them all a deeper and more eager interest.

Beatrice became agitated, and raising her eyes beyond them in the distance to where her father's were so keenly thrown, she beheld a crowd of boys coming laughingly forward, and among them old Pierce Pigot capering, and whirling, and flourishing his cap in an ecstacy of joy. Close behind him appeared a

sedate Scottish prisoner on horseback, who, with a sharp and searching eye, was continually darting forward his head in wonder and surprise at the objects around him. This was Sir Gabriel de Glowr of Falaside; and in a gallant youth, who came immediately after him, she discovered mettle more attractive. Scarcely, however, had she observed him, when old Pigot suddenly composed himself, and pointing towards the window where she was standing with her father, directed the young warrior to look in that direction. Sir Amias in the same instant uttered a deep and hollow groan, and staggering backward, as if stunned by a blow, sank into a seat, and covered his face with his hands.

Beatrice required no explanation of the cause of this strange perturbation. She guessed that the youth was her cousin; and after having momentarily moved towards her father, she turned again to the window, but Rothelan had passed.

"Beatrice," said Sir Amias feebly, "lend me thine arm, and assist me to my chamber."

The dejection of his accent recalled her wandering imagination, and reminded her of the task which her mother had enjoined her to undertake.

"You are ill," she replied, going to his side; "it has overtaken you suddenly."

"No: not suddenly," said he, in a sad and low voice; "not suddenly, I have suffered from it long. It is a malady, my child, for which I fear there is no medicine."

"Alas! say not so; whence doth it proceed?"

The tone in which she asked the question was gentle and compassionate; but there was such a meaning in the look with which it was accompanied, that Sir Amias felt it in the depths of his bosom. Nevertheless he replied, as he rose with the intention of retiring—

"It is an infirmity of the spirit. The

mind hath its sicknesses and its surfeits, as well as the corporal body, and I have long been sensible that all is not well with mine."

"You were disturbed by some object in the street?"

Sir Amias shook in his limbs, and eyed her for a moment with a stern and jealous look, and then he added in his wonted manner—

"What was there that should affect me?"

"I thought," replied Beatrice timidly, "that something in the appearance of the lady who stood with the Jew near Ralph Hanslap seemed to draw your particular attention."

"What lady! How know you aught of that lady? She is a stranger—What is she to me?"

The quickness and impatience of these hasty questions disconcerted Beatrice, and she became somewhat confused: her father in the same instant snatched her hand, and then added, in a whisper—

"Yes, you are right—that lady was my brother's widow."

"Widow!" exclaimed Beatrice.

Sir Amias dropped her hand, and clasping his own together, walked hastily across the room. This emotion, however, was soon mastered, and he returned towards her with a resolute calmness in his manner, and said—

"She hath always persisted in calling herself his widow, but it is a pretence that I can never allow."

Beatrice sighed and looked at him with a beseeching sorrowfulness in her eyes, and then replied, with a voice full of tenderness and grief—

"And why will you never allow that she is Lord Edmund's widow? My mother has told me her story; and the noble carriage with which she sustained the misfortune of your denial persuades me that she is indeed greatly wronged. I beseech you, sir, as you respect your own honour, to sift this matter, and do her justice."

"Would you have me to tell the world that for so many years I have usurped the rights of her son?"

"Yes: it cannot be much longer concealed."

"Concealed, Beatrice!—What do you mean?"

She discovered by his manner that he was overawed, and that he trembled, and her tears beginning to flow, she fell upon his shoulder, exclaiming,

"O forgive me that I venture to speak so plainly, but it can no longer be concealed that you are betrayed!"

He started at the word, and pushing her softly from him, exclaimed, "By whom, by whom?"

Beatrice folded her hands together, and raising her eyes, said—

"The accuser is yourself. That disease of your spirit bears witness to the wrongs of the Lady Albertina; and you have seen her

avenger in that youth who looked up to the window as he passed. Send for him, and restore at once his rights."

"What know you of him?" cried Sir Amias, with a vacant and bewildered air. "He hath been years in Scotland; you cannot have seen him before, at least to remember."

"Nor have you seen him since infancy, and yet you knew him at the first sight."

"I have had cause to expect him."

"I know you had; and that cause makes me bold to urge you to repair the injuries he has suffered. It is vain, sir, to tell me, after what I have seen, that you are not yourself convinced the Lady Albertina is, as you have said, Lord Edmund's widow."

At this crisis of their conversation, Ralph Hanslap opened the door and looked in, but seeing Beatrice he immediately withdrew; leaving, however, the door unclosed, as a signal to Sir Amias to follow.

"Go not to him," exclaimed Beatrice, observing her father moving away: "he is your evil genius. The wrong you have done has been of having so ready an instrument;" and she would have detained her father by the skirt of his surcoat, but he withdrew it from her grasp, and quickly left the room.

CHAPTER IV.

MOTHER AND CHILD.

I do remember well that artless homage,
Which the fond infant to his mother paid,
Smiling and nuzzling, hanging to her bosom;
But I remember more—her greater love;—
Those fond endearments which seek no return—
What even error sanctifies and strengthens,—
The boundless bounties of a mother's breast.

HENLEY'S MIROPE.

IN the meantime the Scottish king had been conducted to the Tower, and the prisoners were distributed among the convents. Sir Gabriel de Glowr, with Rothelan and a number of others, were lodged in the priory dedicated to St Bartholomew, in Smithfield, where Padre Giovanni, the confessor of the Lady Albertina, still continued an inmate.

This meek ecclesiastic was now a very old and infirm man; but, like the rest of the friars, he was roused by the events of the day, and was standing in the cloisters when the prisoners were brought into the court. The youth, and bold free air of Rothelan, attracted his attention, and something also in his look and manners awakened his curiosity to so great a degree, that he went towards him, and inquired if he was indeed a Scotsman?

"No," replied the youth, "I am by birth English, and I know little more of what I am;" for he retained only a vague and boyish reminiscence of his early life.

Sir Gabriel here interposed, adding—

"'Deed, sir, he's an Englisher, and come, or am mista'en, o' gentle blood. It would be very discreet o' you, an ye could help us to his friens, for I doubt na they'll be glad to niffer his ransom for mine."

"Nay," replied Rothelan laughingly, with an accent entirely Scottish, "we're even now,

Sir Gabriel, I owe you no ransom, and will be paid for my clothes: I always said I should."

While they were thus speaking, and Padre Giovanni was anxiously endeavouring to trace the resemblance that interested him in the appearance of Rothelan, the gates, which had been closed to keep out the crowd, were opened, and Shebak, the brother of Adonijah, was allowed to come in.

Notwithstanding the long period which had elapsed since the Jew bargained for the page's apparel, he knew the Baron of Falaside again at once; indeed, the particular and characteristic manner in which Sir Gabriel ever and anon darted his eyes from under his brows to the right and left, was too remarkable ever to be forgotten, especially when seen, as it had been by Shebak, under the influence of considerable excitement. It renewed, in fact, the recollection of what had then taken place so vividly, that Shebak forgot, in the distinctness of the impression, the years which had passed,

and said, as if he felt that the transaction was scarcely concluded—

"What have you done with the child?"

This question, and the appearance of the little old Jew, at first seemed to surprise Rothelan and Sir Gabriel. The friar, affected by a deeper and more emphatic emotion, moved totteringly backward, and leant against one of the pillars of the cloisters.

After a brief pause, during which Rothelan looked earnestly at Shebak, as if actuated by some blind groping of the memory, Sir Gabriel, who, in the meantime, had recognised him, began to laugh and chuckle, exclaiming—

"Na! this is a curiosity—is't a possibility? and are ye the real Jew man—the extortioner that cheated me o' the laddie's braverie for a naething?"

This commentary on the transaction alluded to was certainly not historically correct; but the Baron of Falaside was not the only

man of his time that felt as if he had been somehow over-reached, merely because his own adroit, or rather left-handed dealing, had been easily accomplished; nay, for that matter, we suspect the baron's feeling at the moment was one common enough, as God knows, to all sorts of men of all times. But not to dwell on so invidious a topic; for, in the abundance of our philanthropy, we have long ceased to relish the faults and foibles of the world, believing that every one, in the zeal of his self-worship, does in all things what he thinks is wisest, cleverest, rightest, best. The terms are synonimous in the vocabulary of business. But to our tale.

After some other colloquy between the parties assembled in the cloisters of St Bartholomew, Rothelan was recognised, and informed of his birth and family by Padre Giovanni. Application was then made to the prior to procure permission for him to go with Shebak to see his mother. But not to weary the com-

teous reader with a tedious record of small circumstances, we shall pass over the minute details of the Chronicler, and relate what passed at their meeting.

It appears that the lady and Adonijah having been informed by Pierce Piget to what monastery Rothelan had been conducted, Shebak was sent by his brother to procure his liberation at any ransom; and they were anxiously waiting the result of his mission, when he returned to them, followed by the young soldier. Before our author, however, proceeds to relate what then ensued, he allows his pen to slide, as it were, into one of those trains of pensive reflection which constitute more of the moral effect of his story, than the lesson which the issues of the incidents may be said to teach.

"The heart of man," he observes, "after it has become sordid and worldly, retains many delicious sentiments of young remembrance, as the withered rose does the sweet

perfume of its beautiful blushing. But of all the gentle affections of generous humanity, there is none that endureth longer, nor beareth fresher, so much of the pure, the excellent, and the exquisite, as the gracious largess of parental love. It is the artery that supplieth the quality of tenderness in the spirit of man; and all that hath the holy names of charity and mercy draw some portion of their virtue from its ventricle. But in its flowing there is a mystery to cause both wonder and sorrow; for often it engendereth but aches and anguish; and yet with those to whom it is a fountain of such affliction, it would seem to give only an augmentation of delight,—making them cling to their children long after they have outgrown all need of care; yea, prompting them to encounter singular humiliations, and to fondle over them even while they lie fatally tainted with the foul plague-spots of crime—as if they loved the more because they should esteem the less."

The depth and pathos of that parental feeling the Lady Albertina was happily not doomed to prove to any such extremity; but a strange anguish filled her bosom for a moment with grief and disappointment, when, instead of the blithe and blooming boy—the dimpled and smiling, gay, buoyant, and bounding child—the blossom of life, innocent and lovely—the little helpless and heedless thing, towards which her maternal heart had felt as if it longed for the possession of wings to shelter and overspread,—she beheld a gallant youth, conscious of power, and arrogant to protect, entering the chamber with a knightly air and a resounding tread.

She looked hurriedly at him as he advanced; she could not see in him the child she had so long lost; she felt as if some cold-hearted imposition was practised upon her, she recoiled from his filial embrace, and in the first burst of her emotion, exclaimed—

"Alas, it is not him! That young man is not my pretty Rothelan."

For a moment he stood, as it were, arrested by this denial; but presently a smile brightened on his countenance, and so vividly assured her that he was no other than the same prankful creature, whose blooming image had been so long her sole enjoyment, that she started from her seat, and rushing into his arms, pressed him to her bosom.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT NEXT?

Green-vestured Spring hath in the orchard hung
Her rosy garlands, and the village crones
Quaintly discourse of the big-bellied buds,
As hopeful pledges of a plenteous year.
NEW PLAY.

WHILE the mother and her son were enjoying their mutual felicitations, Adonijah, rewarded with delight for having ministered to so much happiness, remained silent, till the lady began to speak of his singular friendship and great virtues, when he interrupted her, saying—

"Very well; and shall I not have many rewards and great profit?"

Shebak, still standing near the door, was so exceedingly pleased to hear his brother say so, that he came close up to him; for hitherto

he had thought that Adonijah's generosity to the Lady Albertina little less than treason against their tribe, though he had never courage enough to express that opinion, even in the form of advice, the best sort of preparation for rendering remonstrance palatable.

"Yes," added Adonijah, looking askance at Shebak,—"yes; now shall I have my profits; I will make no abatements, no not one scruple of the rich earnings of my compassions for this lady;" and, then casting his eyes upwards, he folded his hands in silence for a moment and bowed his head, as he exclaimed, "Avenger of Israel, quench the wrath that thou hast kindled in me against my brother!"

The astonished Shebak hastily withdrew, and quitted the room, while Rothelan and the Lady Albertina looked at the indignant old man with a mingled sentiment of reverence and surprise.

"Yes," cried Adonijah, "I have been as the avaricious sea: I have made myself rich by storms and the cruel wreck of argosies. I have gems, and golden ingots, and the bread of orphans in my dark and secret places. Am I not a Jew? Shall I not have my profits? Lady, when you were in despair, was I not your hope? will you not pay me for that? I am a Jew; I will be paid. Young man, ask your mother; she will tell you what I have done for her and for you. What will you now give me for all that I have done, and for what I will yet do, for you shall be the lord of your own heritage, and be honoured of the King."

The vehemence of Adonijah having spent itself in this manner, his voice resumed its wonted mildness and melody, and he said, with an accent of tenderness and regret,—

"But it is my fortune,—my pleasures are all but memories. Never yet has Heaven given me leave to taste of any joy, but in the

midst of such troubles and panics, that I knew not at the time whether the thing was good or evil. When I saw your blood grew proud, and I said, in my heart, this happiness is my work; but Belshazzar was punished in the glory of his banquet. Yet wherefore did I complain? Can the deformed stand erect in the pride of manliness like thee, my son? It is not his fault, but his fate, that hath made Shebek as an ichor in the loins of Israel; and I sin in being vext to such heat against him. But, lads, there is no time for vain discourse. It will not be long, as we have known from his past stratagems, till Sir Amias gains tidings of your son's restoration. Let us therefore, proceed to the high priest of Winchester, and remind him of what he was told on a former occasion. Though he was then slack, and tarried in resolution, he may now, peradventure, be quickened into more speed, when he sees——

The Jew was suddenly interrupted by a

loud knocking at the door, which, before he had time to determine what course to take, was repeated in a more violent manner. A summons so peremptory was not at any time in that age an agreeable sound to the sons of Israel. The Lady Albertina, to whom apprehension had become habitude, was even more disturbed than Adonijah; and, in the first promptings of alarm, she clung to her son, and would have hurried him into an inner apartment.

"Let us see what it is," said Rothelan, who alone retained his self-possession; "shall I open the door?" moving to do so. But before he had taken two steps across the floor, the knocking was repeated for the third time, and in a moment after, Shebak, pale and terrified, rushed into the room, and told them that Sir Amias, with Ralph Hamslap, demanded admittance.

"Let them come," replied Rothelan; "what have we to fear?"

Shebak immediately retired to open the door, when Adonijah replied,—

"He hath done wrongs to you;—is not that cause to have fears?—But let us meet him with his own devices;—he comes himself. Surely by that he would seem to be a friend; therefore let us not show him the adversities which are in our hearts against him."

"Shall I smother the sense that I have of my mother's injuries?" said Rothelan impatiently.

"Softly, I pray you, good young man; in this matter be counselled;—we are yet in jeopardies," said Adonijah, patting Rothelan on the arm.

"I shall hear what he has to say; but less than scorn he may not expect from me."

"He may not know," interposed the lady, "either of what has happened, or of my being here. He may have but business with you, Adonijah;—will it not then be better

for us to retire, and leave you to meet him alone?"

"There is much wisdom in that thought," replied Adonijah; and with unwonted alacrity he opened the door of an inner chamber, and hurried them in, shutting it softly after them. He then hastened to a stool near a table on which were implements and materials for writing.

Scarcely had he taken his place at the table, and lifted a pen, when Shebak entered, followed by the knight and his trust-worthy squire.

"Ha! my very good friend, Sir Amias de Crosby," exclaimed Adonijah, starting up as if suddenly roused from ruminiation,—"this is great homage;—to visit my house!—I had no reckonings of such honour."

The knight, without answering this salutation, looked round the apartment, and was evidently disappointed at seeing only Adonijah.

"I have heard," replied Sir Amias, with his wonted mildness of manner, "that a lady, whom I have long greatly desired to see again, was in your house,—is it so?

"There is a lady, the Lady Albertina, that was called your brother's wife. Yes; she is in this house;—she hath borrowed monies of me. Good Sir Amias de Crosby will help her to pay me again; for I am a poor man, and my monies are my life."

"Where is she?—I would see her;—I would speak with her."

Adonijah fixed his eye firmly in the knight's face as he said,—

"I will bring her to you;—but she is in great pleasantries with her son."

A change passed over the countenance of Sir Amias;—it was not a blush,—nor confusion,—nor the expression of any surprise,—but a sudden contraction of the features, such as is sometimes seen when the mind is resolved to master an intolerable anguish. Ralph

Hanslap, who was standing at the knight's elbow, maintained that perfect composure of face for which he was so remarkable; but at the mention of Rothelan being with his mother, he pulled the knight by the skirt of his surcoat, and then looking at the Jew, said,—

"Her son!—Where has he been?—Whence has he come?"

Adonijah, without making any answer, addressed himself again to the knight—

"He is for beauty a very Absalom;—your eyes will be proud to see such a kinsman: and will he not be to you as Joseph was in Egypt to his brethren?"

"Where is he?" exclaimed Sir Amias: "I have not come to talk with you."

Adonijah, perceiving that the conversation might, if continued, expose himself to some hazard, instead of making any apology for the remark which provoked the knight so far to forget the courtesy due even to a Jew

in his own house, laid his hand humbly on his bosom, and then opening the door of the room into which the lady and her son had retired, he went forward and remained within, while they advanced towards their kinsman.

CHAPTER VI.

OVERTURES.

How like a fawning publican he looks.

SHAKSPEARE.

EXPERIENCE, it is said, teaches fools,—it may be so. Our author, however, remarks, that she but instructeth them to use cunning with their folly. Indeed, from our own acquaintance with the venerable matron, we are much inclined to be of his opinion, because we have reason to suspect, in as much as regards knowledge of the world, that she but teaches invidiousness. "Experience is, in sooth, of an austere temperament," says the Chronicler, "and hath but little respect for those hopes

and promises wherein youth so much delighteth. She wrencheth them from his young grips as a lean and hard-favoured schoolmistress snatcheth away the buds and blossoms which the little boy gathered as he came whistling in the sunny spring morning to school, and chideth, yea, chastiseth, as with a rod, for the idleness of pulling flowers that will so soon wither."

But of all those lessons which warn us to question the magnanimity of human nature, there is no one learnt with more reluctance than that which teaches how much knavery is blent with affability. And thus it happened, that the feelings with which young Rotheram listened to the plausible urbanity of his uncle were of a much more complaisant kind than those with which his mother was at the same time affected.

Sir Amias advanced into the room with a collected and respectful demeanour: he approached the Lady Albertine, who somewhat retired as he came forward, and then, with

duke addressing himself to her, he suddenly turned round, and said to Rothelan—

"I doubt not you have heard the unfortunate circumstances under which your mother withdrew from my house?"

Rothelan, who had knotted his brows, and was resolved to be stern even to fierceness, glanced his eye towards Sir Amias, and made no answer. The knight continued—

"It has only been by the most singular accident that I have heard to-day of you and of her. It is reported that you have been taken in the Scottish service; but all my influence will be exerted to procure your pardon. I will assist you, though your mother would never let me be her friend. Yet the treason of bearing arms against your rightful king—"

At these words the Lady Albertine, who had stood for some time in a state of amazement, scarcely moving an eyelid, uttered a shriek, yet low, strange, and fearful sound, so wild, solemn, and woful, that even Ralph

Hanslap, who was standing beside his master, started.

"Found to be lost for ever," she then added, in an accent of extreme anguish; but suddenly rallying, she darted at Sir Amias a look that searched his heart, and exclaimed,—"Who sent him among the Scots—who was the traitor?" Her voice, however, became thick, impetuous, and impassioned. She could not proceed; her bosom struggled with the utterable indignation, and she clenched her hands with the energy of despair.

"How long, madam," said Sir Amias, "will you do me injustice?"

"It is false," was her vehement reply; "I do you no wrong; I accuse you of no offence to which your own conscience does not bear witness. Have you not cause in your covetousness to wish for his destruction? Why are you here? We seek not your aid, we scorn it; we desire your malice and hatred, but we have both already, Sir Amias, your

know we have, ay, to the utmost sentiment of guilt fearful of retribution."

Sir Amias, with a calm and compassionate countenance, heightened almost to a smile, endured these bitter reproaches, and while she was thus giving vent to her indignant animosity, he several times looked towards his nephew as if he would have said,—"Is it possible that you will suffer her to proceed in such a manner?"

When she had for some time indulged her passion, she paused, and laying her hand on the shoulder of her son, bent her head and began to weep.

"I can struggle with my fate no longer," said she. "Yes, Sir Amias, do as you think fit. I have neither courage nor hope to contend with your craft."

"But I have," cried Rothelan, gently withdrawing from her, and advancing with a respectful air towards his uncle, whom he thus addressed:—

"I am but acquainted yet in part with my brother's injuries and the wrongs done to myself."

"I beseech you," cried Sir Amias, interrupting him, "I beseech you to listen to what I would say. It may be as you now believe, always said, that she is indeed the widow of my brother, and that you are his rightful heir; but consider how many years have passed since his death, during which she has brought no proof whatsoever to confirm her story. Surely in so long a time what she avers might have been confirmed by some testimony. She still but offers reproaches instead of proof. In order, however, that there may be no farther controversy, and to show how much I am in verity the friend to her that I have always professed myself and to you I am no less,—let but any one witness who was present at the alleged marriage of your father, and this lady be produced, and I will freely abdicate all that I possess which she claims as yours."

[illegible] with a look and tone of an air [illegible] voice, that Ethelan turned towards his mother with an altered and subdued look. She, however, only disconsolately shook her head. Sir Amias added—

"Can I do more?—can more be reasonably expected of me?—the honour and inheritance of a noble house are in my keeping,—and I dare not, without the forfeiture of integrity, give them over to another, until he has made good a better title to the trust. But why should we idly waste words in protestations, and forget the main intent of this visit, which was to invite you to my house."

"You shall not go," exclaimed the Lady Albertina, catching the skirt of her son's surcoat; "you shall not go; he will put poison in your drink."

Sir Amias became pale, and threw a hasty glance towards Ralph Hunslap, who was standing somewhat behind him, and who,

on hearing the accusation, dropped his eyelids, but in no other respect was apparently moved.

"You rail, lady," said the knight after a short pause, during which he had regained his wonted complexion, "and pity bespeaks both license and pardon; but your son, I perceive, will do me more justice than to credit your accusations."

"Then he will scheme his injured mother," exclaimed the lady. "He is no son of mine, if he will not feel as I feel, and resent as I do."

"I again offer him the protection of my influence."

"God will protect him, as I have been protected. There is no boon that he will accept from you—the slanderer of my fame—the robber of his rights."

"Nay then, madam, if you will so chide, I may not, without dishonour, continue to hear you;—I came as a friend.

Rothelan was perplexed. The self-possession of his uncle, and the vehemence of his mother, were so opposite, that his young experience could afford no key to the dissimulation of the one, nor did the occasion seem to justify the heat of the other. Without feeling the slightest disposition to call in question the truth of his own history, of which he had been so recently informed, he felt himself irresistibly inclined to think that there was great fairness and even generosity in the behaviour of Sir Amias. Accordingly, when the knight, at the last burst of the lady's reproaches, withdrew from the apartment, followed by Ralph Hamlap, he went with him to the door, and would even have taken his uncle's proffered hand, but his mother, in the same moment, rushed forward, and pulling him back, as if from the danger of contagion, abruptly closed the door, exclaiming—"You came as a spy; you came as a deceiver; you did not, but only to deceive and to betray."

CHAPTER VII.

THE BURNT CHILD.

I have known him by confessions—
Have seen the part he play'd—tasted the bitter
Of that false cup which he so sweetly mingled,
And will you bid me trust the man again?

THE STEPMOTHER.

ADONIJAH, on hearing Sir Amias de Crosby retire, came abruptly out from the place of his concealment, where he had been listening to all that had passed. His visage was pale, his lips livid, and his eyes eager. He rushed forward with his hands spread, and his arms stretched out before him. His whole appearance betokened fear. He trembled, and looked quickly from side to side, and around; his steps were soft and wide, as if he dreaded

some alarming detection; even his voice, when he spoke, though earnest and emphatic in the accent, was in sound but an apprehensive whisper.

"Fly! make haste and be away!" he exclaimed, seizing Rothelan by the skirt. "There is peril in every moment that you abide here. I beseech you to go. There, take these monies; they will serve you till you are safe. Many men, brave warriors, are now passing to King Edward, get you along with them. It was all ice, treacherous ice, that he showed to you in his promises. You are lost if you trust him. Your lady mother is again a wreck; and the poor kind Jew, that would be good for the profit of pleasures, he will be an ignominy among men."

Rothelan, though somewhat impressed by the eloquence of Adonijah, and though also affected by the alarmed and manifest solicitude of his mother, had been yet so moved by the plausible urbanity of his uncle, that he

but remotely sympathized with their anxieties and their fears.

"I discover no reason," said he, "for all this jealousy; what Sir Amias de Grosby says is just and fair. It is our fault if we do not bring the proof that will content him. How has it been, madam, that you have suffered so many years to pass without obtaining from Florence the slender evidence which he is so willing to accept as sufficient?"

The Lady Albertina made no answer; but moving towards a seat, sat down, and covering her face with her hands, began to weep bitterly. Adonijah had, in the meantime, become more composed; and though still greatly agitated, was yet so much master of himself as to be able to reply.

"It were guilt against the bounty of nature, could one so rich with the bravest of youth question on so brief a knowledge, the bankrupt friendship of that hollow and unsafe Sir Amias de Grosby. It is a fair blossom on

a green thought not to have discerned his perfidy. I should have grieved even to tears if, with such an inheritance of gracious qualities, you had been found so niggardly as not to have given him that full measure of confidence which words so garnished merited to obtain."

"But," said the Lady Adventina, who had heard what Adonijah said, "that he should be so inclined towards that false bad man as to put any thing which he could say in competition with my sentiments! Nay, it is dishonour to my mother to think that she but might have been the dupe of his soft words, his courteous mildness, his altogether neat of grace and smiles, so mildly, so courteously, so softly,—Oh! so cruelly imply."

This impassioned grief was so far beyond any anguish of the same kind ever witnessed by Rachelan, that he stood abashed, and unable to reply. Adonijah observed his embarrassment, and partly divining the cause, said—

"But no controversies; there is now no

present time for discourse. Put up the monies and go—go to the river's side; there you shall find many ships with brave soldiers, all for France. Go with them—be in the king's camp—there is the Lord Mowbray—tell him you are the very little page—the merchant's son—say to him all you have heard; nay, stay not to make arguments, for there is a sword in some unseen hand at your back."

In saying these words, he took hold of Rothelan, and eagerly pushed him out of the chamber, following him, and shutting the door behind, leaving the Lady Albertina alone.

"But," said Rothelan, while they were still in the house, "where is the need to be thus so much afraid? I have no fear of my uncle, and if I leave my mother, in what sort will her condition be mended? No: I will remain with her."

"You speak as becomes your years," exclaimed Adonijah emphatically. "Have we

not seen to what devices that Sir Amias can resort? He will be kind to you; he will be fair to you; he will make much of you, and will, if you bear with patience the yoke of bastardy,—O such a friend as you shall find in that good Sir Amias de Crosby!"

"Still," said Rothelan, "I see no cause for such haste. I have but just found myself a son, and honoured with the embrace of a mother, who has long endured misfortune. I cannot part from her in this manner, and that too as a fugitive. All I have heard, all you have said, but serves to convince me that I ought to remain here, to vindicate her fame, and to recover my own rights, so unjustly, as you tell me, withheld."

"Did not Sir Amias," exclaimed Adonijah wildly, "did not Sir Amias speak pitiful compassion for you as a traitor? Think you he had no purposes in those words? But, come, come; this is no present time for controversies."

Rotheian, however, still seemed to hesitate; but the impatience of Adomjah became passion, and he cried, with a shrill and panic voice, for Shebak, who was in the house, to come to him.

"Brother," said he, "take this youth to the river; see that he is put into a ship—heed not his remonstrances,—say to all men he is mad if he will not go. He hath inheritances, and honours, and a great avenging to perform, and yet doth he peril them all, because Sir Amias de Crosby hath a courteous tongue."

Without allowing either Shebak or Rotheian to make any reply, he hurried them forward with extended arms before him, and in a manner forced them out of the house.

"Now," said he, on returning to the lady, "let us go with quick feet to the chief priest of Winchester. Let us tell him that your son is found, and all the marvels which this

day hath brought forth. Traitor!—who made the stripling a traitor?"

The importance attached by Adonijah to the allusion which Sir Amias had made to Rothelan having been found in arms with the enemy, awakened anew the fears and anxieties of his mother. Nor were the apprehensions of the Jew without reason: for the knight, notwithstanding the apparent equanimity with which he had sustained the reproaches of the lady, had felt them in the innermost corners of his heart, and had in consequence, immediately on quitting the house, sent Ralph Hanslap to Westminster, in order that he might give information to procure the arrest of Rothelan. Scarcely, however, had he committed this new crime, when he was assailed by all the stings of conscience. The scene with his daughter in the morning was renewed in his mind with its shame and anguish tenfold augmented. The futility of all his previous perfidy, as demonstrated by the unexpected and

immediate restoration of his nephew, overwhelmed him with awe and dread. It seemed to him that Providence was manifestly working against him, and he returned hastily towards his own house, torn by remorse, and agitated with vague and irresolute wishes, that he could obliterate the memory of the past, and, without disclosing the dishonour he had incurred, restore the widow and her son to their just rights.

CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

How dull thou art to ask me what he said,
As if young love had need of any tongue,
Or other lips, to tell his fond intents,
Than the soft eyelids of his speaking glance.

THE SWAIN AND MAIDEN.

BEATRICE, in the meantime, had described to her mother the agitation and remorse which she had witnessed in her father, and with many tears lamented that he yielded himself so implicitly, as she in her filial affection regarded it, to the influence and ascendency of Ralph Hanslap.

The Lady de Crosby listened to her without speaking, and when she paused, remained reclining on the couch, with her hands folded

on her bosom, and her eyes closed, evidently entranced in sad and solemn rumination.

Beatrice, observing her abstraction, remained silent by the side of the couch, watching her countenance with solicitude and sorrow.

"Are you still there, my child?" said the lady, after some time had so passed, and turning her eyes towards Beatrice, she gently took hold of her hand, adding—

"I have thought of what you have been telling me, and I see that Providence hath yet reserved a way by which your father's offence may be expiated without dishonour."

Beatrice made no reply; but sat expecting some explanation. Lady de Crosby, however, relapsed into her abstraction, and again remained some considerable time without speaking. At last she said, as it were to herself,—"If he bear any likeness to his father, I shall not despair;" and turning to her daughter, she added,—"Did you particularly observe him?"

"Of whom do you speak?" replied Beatrice, curiously affecting not to know what she was perfectly aware of.

Her mother, without heeding the question, said—

"Lord Edmund was, in his time, accounted the ornament of English chivalry."

Another pause ensued, which the Lady de Crosby was again the first to break.

"I will make you acquainted with the Lady Albertina,—Holy Mary! dispose her heart to be in unison with mine."

"Do you doubt that I am entirely with you?" said Beatrice affectionately, mistaking the object of her mother's ejaculation; adding, "I long to know her, and will count the hours heavily till you have brought us together."

The Lady de Crosby looking at her daughter with an expression of more inward satisfaction than was wont to beam through the habitual sadness of her smile, said—

"You shall go with me to vespers in St Helens. It is then that I meet the unfortunate Lady Albertina. But did you not say that she saw her son pass?"

"I know not," replied Beatrice, somewhat simply, "if he was her son; I but thought so: he had a lordly presence."

"So was his father wont to appear when mounted. Heaven prosper the event that comes with such good omen! Then you did observe him, Beatrice?"

A slight tinge, scarcely a blush, dawned upon her neck and face, wherefore it would not be easy to tell, as she replied—

"I had no time to look at him; for in that moment my father retired from the window overcome with emotion."

"To think you had no time," said her mother, "and yet to have so noted the bearing of his carriage, argues that you saw him more with your thoughts than by your eyes;" and taking her again by the hand, she added, with

a cheerfulness of voice and manner, the more remarkable as it was singular and different indeed from her custom, "As the mind at a glance can pass itself from earth to heaven, and run back over all that has been, so at times it hath power to comprehend in the instant more than may be commonly learnt by study in many years. I doubt not, though you have but for a moment seen our young kinsman, that you think of him as if you had been long familiar."

Beatrice acknowledged that it was so; and her mother tenderly pressed her hand, having in the meantime, while speaking, raised herself from the reclining posture in which she had hitherto continued on the couch.

"I know not," said she, "why I should any longer hold, as it were, a clandestine intercourse with the Lady Albertina. It is unworthy of the homage due to her virtues, and accords not with my own nature. Come,

Beatrice, though the walk is for me an unwonted undertaking, I will visit her,—she lives in the house of Adonijah the Jew;—you will go with me, and thereafter we shall be all as friends and kindred should."

At that crisis Sir Amias entered the room. He had returned home from his unsuccessful interview with the Lady Albertina; his countenance was clouded, and his whole demeanour indicated anxiety and disappointment. But he was so often absent and embarrassed in his appearance, that the state in which he then was might have passed at any other time unnoticed. The events, however, of the day had awakened in the mind of his daughter an unusual interest; and being now aware of the cause which so evidently affected him, instead of addressing him in that open and artless manner with which she was accustomed to entice him out of his gloom and sullenness, she shrunk at his approach, and regarded him, unconsciously, with a degree of distrust and ap-

prehension so visible, that it soon excited his attention.

At first he was surprised, and felt disposed to inquire why she was so altered towards him; when suddenly recollecting what had passed on seeing Rothelan, he became confused, and for a moment was humbled in the presence of his own child. It was, however, but for a moment; the evil of his bosom soon again quickened, and he turned toward his lady with a stern countenance, and seemed as if he would have accused her of chilling the affections of his daughter. But, instead of the cold and repulsive look with which she had for so many years regarded him, he was astonished to see gladness in her eyes, and a happy offering of kindness and reconciliation in the manner with which she beckoned to him to sit by her on the couch.

This change affected him still more than the embarrassment of Beatrice. He stood for some time indecisive and hesitating, look-

ing now at the one, and then at the other, anxious to know what had happened, and diffident to inquire.

"I would speak with your father, alone," said the Lady de Crosby, and Beatrice immediately left the room. Sir Amias followed her with his eye till the door was closed behind her, and then, without moving from the spot in which he was standing, he regarded her mother with a mixture of wonder and curiosity, unable to imagine what she could possibly have to tell that might not have been said before their daughter.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RITER BIT.

I know not how your so affected zeal
To be reputed a true-hearted subject
May stretch or turn you. CHAPMAN.

SIR ARTHUR DE CAUSEY moved, as it were mechanically, towards the couch on which his lady was sitting, and sat down beside her. For the space of a minute or two they remained silent. They had so long lived in a state of estrangement, that, notwithstanding her desire to tell him what she had planned respecting their daughter and Rothelan, she felt herself embarrassed and unable to proceed. She was, besides, at a loss in what manner to begin, lest, by apprising him that she was acquainted with the return of their nephew, he should suspect her of having se-

cretly conspired against him. She had, in fact, long remarked, that, from the time when the Lady Albertina quitted the house, he regarded her with distrust, and often looked, though he said nothing, as if he was conscious that he had forfeited her love.

"Beatrice tells me," she at last diffidently said, "that you have been ill,—that something had occurred——"

Sir Amias looked at her sharply, and for a moment seemed disposed to silence her abruptly; but she added, in a tone that subdued and repressed his displeasure—

"There is but one thing, Sir Amias, but only one, that I know of, likely to have affected you so deeply."

"And what is that, madam?"

"The reappearance of your brother's widow and her son."

"My brother's widow!—of what widow?—of whom do you speak?—Is it of the Italian girl that he brought home with him?

"But is it her, the Lady Albertina," replied the Lady de Crosby, calmly regarding him with a serene but compassionate look, which he had no courage to repel.

"Sir Amias," she added, laying her hand affectionately upon his, "I have not now for many years spoken to you of that most unfortunate lady, not even to inquire if you had ever heard aught concerning her, or the lost child; yet, Sir Amias, in the chances of the meanwhile, I have not been left altogether in ignorance of their fortunes. They are now both in London."

"Well, madam, and if they are, what is that to me? I would have befriended them; I would have proved to them how truly I accounted myself their guardian and kinsman; but you know how my first kindness was repulsed. You know not, however, that even greater kindness has since been rejected with insult and scorn."

"I will not disturb you," replied his lady,

with a degree of firmness that he was not prepared for in her character; "I will not disturb you with any comment on the past, but I would speak to you of what the future may achieve for the satisfaction of your wishes and the restoration of your honour."

"What do you insinuate, Lady de Crosby? The restoration of my honour! Has it been lost?"

"It is in great peril," was the sedate and emphatic reply; for that true gentlewoman now felt that she had entered on her task, and was resolute to persevere to the uttermost.

"Beatrice," said she, "has seen a youth, whom I believe to be no other than the son of the Lady Albertina; she hath described him to me as one in whose favour she is prepossessed."

Sir Amias de Crosby regarded his wife with a vacant and uncertain countenance, and, hardly aware of his own meaning, said—

"Well, and if it be so?"

"What shame, what suffering, what remorse might be avoided, what a consummation might be accomplished, could their union be brought to pass!"

Sir Amias smote his forehead with his hand, and, starting from his seat, rushed wildly across the floor, exclaiming, "Why did I not think of that?"

"It is not yet too late," replied his lady after a short pause. "Let them be brought together. Give time and opportunity for affection to grow."

But her words, instead of checking his emotion, only served to augment it. He ran distractedly towards her, and gazing in her face, clasped his hands and shook his head, giving utterance to the inexpressible panic of his spirit in a deep and dreadful groan.

"Why," said she, "should what I have suggested move you so fearfully? I beseech you to be calm, and listen to one who holds

your honour and good name in the world as things inestimably precious to her own happiness."

"He is a traitor!" exclaimed Sir Amias wildly. "He has been found with the enemy."

"His youth," replied the lady, "may surely in some degree extenuate his fault, the more especially as he was carried into Scotland while yet a mere boy."

Sir Amias made no answer, but wringing his hands and walking hastily across the floor, he abandoned himself to the upbraidings of his own mind, writhing in the fetters of fatality with which he felt as it were drawn on from crime to crime, and precipitated, by his own temerity, from the only chance which might have saved him from the disgrace of exposure hereafter. At one moment he rushed eagerly towards the door, with the intention to send messengers to recall Ralph Hunslap; at another, he halted suddenly, as if

sensible it was too late, and then he surrendered himself entirely to the tortures of remorse. Again, as quickly mastering his agitation, he assumed a calm and resolute air, advancing towards his lady, as if determined to know how it was that she had became so well acquainted with the history of Rothelan, she who never stirred abroad but to mass, and was denied to every visitor. But almost in the same moment his spirit was changed, and he became humble and despondent, wandering away from her round the room, abject and pitiable.

His lady, ignorant of the perfidious mission on which, after quitting the house of Adonijah, he had so rashly despatched Ralph Handlap to Westminster, sat regarding him with silence and apprehension, unable to comprehend the springs of an extravagance so far, as she thought, beyond the occasion, and so alarmingly at variance with the habitual propriety and self-possession of his character.

When, at last, the violence of his feelings began to abate, and the paroxysm of remorse and self-condemnation had in some degree subsided, he threw himself into a chair, and fixing his eyes on the floor, said, without raising them, after some time spent in rumination—

"Yes; what you suggest might do. I have influence with the regency. The Earl of Northumberland, to whom the king is mainly indebted for the great victory that has been gained over the Scots, is my particular friend. I will bespeak his favour and patronage for our young kinsman; and albeit his mother with so much contumely rejected my friendship, I will yet bring him hither, and treat him as no less than my brother's heir."

In expressing this resolution he became calm; the cloud which generally hung upon his brow cleared away, and he began to commend the prudence and wisdom of his lady, lamenting that for so many years her malady

had so much interrupted their mutual happiness. But while he was thus enjoying the foretaste of a purpose from which he anticipated the recovery of his long-lost peace of mind, one of the servants came into the room, and said, that Ralph Hanslap had returned, and was solicitous to see him.

"Bid him come to me here," said Sir Amias; in the same moment, however, and before the servant had time to quit the room, he hastily rose, and went himself to the door, where, seeing Ralph Hanslap walking in the gallery, he called to him, and said hurriedly—

"Well, how is it? What have you done?"

"Nothing," replied Hanslap, in his dry, slow, and emphatic manner.

"Then, thank Heaven!" exclaimed the knight, "all will yet go well; but how has it happened?"

"He had escaped before the officers reached the Jew's house."

The Lady de Crosby, who heard this, start-

ed from her seat on the couch, and came towards the door where Sir Amias was standing thunderstruck.

"Yes," continued the worthy squire, "though I lost no time, and the officers made all speed, he was gone; we traced him to the iron gate below the Tower, where he embarked, but no one there could tell whether he but crossed the river, or went aboard one of the ships that has sailed with the troops for France."

"Is it of Lord Edmund's son that you speak?" said the lady.

"Yes," replied Ralph Hanslap; "he was taken a prisoner, fighting on the side of the Scots, and, by some strange means, was scarcely in London till his liberty was obtained."

"But you spoke of officers," said she; "what had they to do with him? and why is it that you say he had escaped? Sir Amias, did not you tell me he was a traitor? Why has

Ralph Hanslap been so alert to procure officers to arrest him?"

She added no more; but, looking firmly, though sadly, at her husband, she raised her hands, and with a calm and slight, but solemn movement of her head, she sighed heavily from the bottom of her heart, and then returning to the couch on which she had been sitting, leaned on her elbow, and drew her veil over her face, while Sir Amias and his familiar left the room.

END OF PART III.

ROTHELAN.

PART IV.

ROTHELAN.

PART IV.

CHAPTER I.

THRIFT.

Wiranda twines, with backward tread
And high-stretch'd hand, the fatal thread.
BATTLE OF LARGS.

IN the meantime the tidings of the defeat of the Scottish army at Neville's Cross having reached Scotland, the Chronicler describes the consternation which they universally spread. "Men's minds," says he, "fluttered like snared birds; there was the noise of clamour and cries, and the wail of grief and alarms, and a running to and fro and a gathering together,

and much talking of fearful women. But, although he descants at great length, and with singular beauty and brevity, on all that happened among the commonalty of the nation, we are obliged by our task to confine ourself to the scene that ensued in the castle of Falaside, when the news arrived there of Sir Gabriel de Glowr and Rothelan being among the prisoners taken with the King.

The lady, according to the custom of that age with the Scottish ladies of the baron's degree, was engaged at the time with her maidens in her wonted household thrift; while they were teasing and carding the fleeces of the last sheep which their lord had lifted from the Cheviot fells, she was performing the more solemn mysteries of the Muckle Wheel, an engine of singular power and majesty; indeed, in our opinion, by all that we have been able to read and learn respecting it, an engine which deservedly ought to be regarded as the great ancestor in the line of prime-

genitore of that opulent, flourishing, and multifarious family, so renowned in Glasgow and Manchester by the name of the Jennies.

The method of her spinning, says our author (digressing with his usual freedom from the subject immediately before him), was, in a wonderful and mystical manner, making her, in seeming to the eyes of young grammarians, had any such been there looking, as one of those three solemn sisters, who twine, mete, and mingle the thrids of mortal destiny.

First, by some cunning of craft, she held with her left thumb and forefinger a rowan of carded wool to the point of the spindle, and then gently touching the periphery of the wheel with her right hand, the spindle twined in upon itself a portion of the wool; thereupon she gave the rim another more vehement sweeping touch, stepping at the same time backward with her left hand awfully aloft, drawing out the thread at arm's length as she moved, and singing a melodious ditty, the

wheel all the while humming in unison, and the spindle, like a greedy snake that hath made some great bird its prey, drawing in the bombastious sowen, and growing thicker and thicker in the middle as it fed.

In the midst of this busy whirl of unwearied housewifery, that daily worship of the household divinities, Robin-the-leaper, who had been left at home as warden of the castle during the absence of his master, opened the door, and looked in, crying—

"News, desperate news, my lady!"

The lady, without turning from her task, but bending forward, stepped towards the consuming spindle, and again lending it new vigour by another touch on the periphery, fed it with the new-drawn thread, which it devoured with an eagerness that seemed almost prompted by conscious satisfaction.

"What's the news, Robin?" she then said, without however turning round to look at the ghastly visage of the man, the which was

of such a hue and cast of terror, that the foresters and carders had started in alarm from their task when he first opened the door.

"Is not the king in it?" replied Robin the louper; "is not the master in him, and the Englishers hunting like me?"

The damsels maidens, at these words, dropped the wool from their laps and the cards from their hands, and stared in monumental attitudes. The lady said nothing, but stooping to a basket which stood at her feet, lifted another rowan, the former having been all spun up, and holding it to the spindle, again touched the rim of the wheel, again stepped majestically backward, chanting another verse of the same ditty she had sung before. In the course of this operation, moving somewhat beyond the wonted limit of her backward treading, she observed the consternation in which her maidens were standing, and pausing for a moment, said—

"Lasses, I canna spare siller nor I ne'er ever sae willing."

By this suspension in her task, brief as it was, the thread was broken by the impatient and greedy spindle; so that she was obliged to stop the wheel entirely, in order to withdraw the end of the thread, that she might join it again to the rowan.

While engaged in knotting the broken thread, she looked towards Robin the louper, biting off, at the same time, the ends of the thread superfluous beyond the knot, and said to him—

"Is what ye say true, Robin?"

"Did is't, lady, was his answer; "it's a real truth,—the Provost o' Edinburgh has gotten a letter, and—

"Weel, it canna be helpet," interrupted his mistress, having thus ascertained the fact; "but, lasses, ye'll just hae to ettle wi' the mair eydencie; for nae doot the Englishers

will exact a dreadful ransom, Robin, I rede ye to look to the yett."

But in all this the Penelope of Falside had assumed a fortitude above her character. Her first thought, on hearing what had befallen her husband, was of the ransom which would be required, the payment of which she foresaw would go well to diminish that peculiar store which the baron was wont to call his "bit hainings;" and in the after reflections, she was troubled with the uncinjugal consideration, that it would have been more for the advantage of his family had he died sword in hand, in an honourable manner, on the field of battle. For several days, in consequence, the conflict of that inward controversy tended to exalt her demeanour in the opinion of all around her, by causing her to appear with a becoming aspect of subdued and controlled grief; or at least something so like grief, that no one could discern the difference;

indeed it was thought of her as it had been of other ladies in similar circumstances, that she showed herself as much afflicted as could reasonably be expected.

Having passed some four or five days in that state of dubiety and apparent sorrow, and having heard that several of the ladies of other prisoners who had been taken with the king, were going to England to ransom their lords, she also deemed it her duty to prepare for the same journey. Robin-the-louper was accordingly ordered to get all things in order to accompany her; and, in due time, mounted on a pillion behind him, and carrying with her the identical purse and rose nobles which Sir Gabriel had received from Shebak for the page's dress of Rothelan, she set out for the Borders, expecting to overtake the army at York. But in going southward, being, sib, as she said herself, to the lady of Sir Alberick Redgauntlet, she

were inside to coddle with her, not having seen her since that fatal affair which some years before had happened in the family, and of which a very inaccurate and imperfect account, as we intend to shew in the next chapter, has recently been given to the world.

CHAPTER II.

There are more things in the heavens and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.—HAMLET.

THE courteous reader must have remarked, that we have hitherto abstained, in the most exemplary manner, from all allusion to controverted passages of history, assured of the accurate information of our author, relative to all points and matters whereof he has written. We have never once, in the task of abbreviating his Chronicle, attempted to magnify his superiority, satisfied that his merits required no commentary, but would be sufficiently obvious to those erudite antiquarians whom we have exclusively engaged in this compilation. It is, however, neither fit nor

expedient, that we should, on every occasion, adhere to such severe abstinence; indeed, it were the height of injustice, and derogatory to our scrupulous respect for historical truth, to do so at this particular time, when we see before us one of the most flagrant departures from fact in all the renowned pages of the GREAT UNKNOWN. We allude especially to that passage in REDGAUNTLET, in which he gives an account, most erroneous in every point, of the original of the horse-shoe mark which distinguished the foreheads of the warlike worthies of the loyal family of that name.

In so far as regards the incident of Sir Albert riding over his fallen son, and thereby causing his death, there seems to be no reason to question the correctness of Mr Hernes' statement. But in other respects, the Black Book of Gilsetherton, from which that gentleman derived his information, is not to be implicated. This we say the more

luckily, because our thrifty Lady of Eglinton was nurse-sister to Dame Margery Redgauntlet, the wife of Sir Aldebrick, and knew the whole circumstances well. She was indeed the authority from which the author of our Beautiful Book derived his version of that affecting story; and, according to her account, the horse-shoe mark was not an instantaneous effect of the fatal rencontre the mother had the mysterious consciousness of long and painful rumination.

Our author agrees with Mrs Hinnies, as to the state of Dame Margery, when she heard that her husband's horse's hoof had trampled out the brains of their son, that he does not say that she was then prematurely seized with the pangs of labour, and died in childbed, leaving the child, to which she gave birth, "distinctly marked by the miniature resemblance of a horse-shoe" on the forehead. On the contrary, so far from being prematurely seized with the pangs of labour, the parties

[illegible] that she went her full time, and that she was delivered of a male infant at the end of the first stage of labour. She then describes, in the most affecting manner, the shock which she received, and how, during all the remainder of the pregnancy, she could think of nothing but the horrible impress of the hoof on the bosom of her beloved first-born; which constant meditation, in the opinion of the midwife, unfortunately produced the awful sign. Indeed, no one, who has ever paid any attention to the philosophy of mental sympathies, can doubt that the singular resemblance alluded to could have been impressed, as Mr Harrison solemnly avers, in the manner of puncturation, for every case of this phenomena clearly demonstrates, that they are formed in some early stage of the foetus.

Without doubt there are various opinions on this subject among medical men; some asserting, that it is impossible the thoughts of

that could have any influence on the formation of the child, because anatomists have discovered that there is no nervous connexion between them. But, in the judgment of our author, this is no valid reason, unless it can be shown that the nerves are the conductors of thought, and that the thoughts are the means by which such things are formed, which yet remains to be proved. He, however, seems disposed to deny the fact of the horse-shoe mark being peculiar to the race of Redgauntlet, though he admits that the Lady of Fairside told him that she had herself seen it on the child; for he says, in his quaint way, "But in this there is neither marvel nor miracle, only a credulous superstition—the like thing being plain to be seen on the foreheads of all red-haired men."

We are likewise enabled to correct another error still more important. It does not appear, as Mr Hartley says, that Sir Alberick was killed in the battle of Neville's Cross. On the com-

tury, we are told, that when the Lady of Falaise, riding on a pillion behind Robin the keeper, on her journey to London, had crossed the water of Durham, and was ascending the hill, she saw the knight sitting at a cottage door. He had been dangerously wounded in the battle, fighting by the side of his king, and was left for dead on the field, where he was found next morning by a humane yeoman, who procured help and carried him home. Our author says, that the lady spoke to him, and sympathised with him. He was pale and emaciated, as became his wounded condition; but still manifestly convalescent. At the time she saw him, he was enjoying the temperate warmth of the setting sun, whose low and level beams, shining on the distant vanes and heaven-directing pinnacles of the neighbouring cathedral, had kindled on every point, and spire, as it were, a golden star. A soft haze overspread the landscape, and all around lay images of tranquillity and rest. A country lad,

the son of the yeoman, was counting a piece of the knight's armour, the different parts of which, dented and shrunkled, lay scattered around on the grass.

It does not, however, accord with our strict and straight-forward narration, to give any farther account of this episode, than to mention that the lady, before parting, cautioned the wounded knight not to be too free in speaking of his rank and circumstances, lest it should provoke his host to extort an inordinate ransom.

She then bade him adieu, and her squire touching the flank of their horse with his spur, away they trotted. The road, however, was rough, and the horse a hard trotter, in so much that, by the time they alighted at the hostel, where they halted for the night, the lady was, in consequence, so sorely bumped and chafed withal, that she was unable next morning to resume the journey. Towards the afternoon, however, she became easier, and,

therefore, while we allow the reader, with his mind's eye, to follow her during the rest of her long journey, we shall return to relate what, in the meantime, took place in London after the sudden departure of Rothelan for Calais.

CHAPTER III.

MISGIVINGS.

O, what a wind of fate, within itself,
A conscious feeling of its destination?

JOANNA BAILLIE.

When Adonijah had hurried Rothelan away, he returned to her Lady Albertina, and, with increasing impatience, hastened her to go with him to the Bishop of Winchester, who was at that time chief minister. What passed at their interview with the prelate is not particularly described; but only, that the Jew reminded him of their former visit, so many years before, and of the casket of jewels which was then left with him, for the purpose of being employed in the sifting of Sir Amias de Gresby. It would appear, however, from the

sequel, that they informed him of the intermediate history of Rothelan, and of the new anxieties the knight had awakened, by the stress which he laid on the circumstance of the young warrior having been found in arms on the Scottish side.

On this occasion the bishop acted with more promptitude than when they saw him before; perhaps, because he had then less to do; for the actions of persons, in public as well as private trusts, are as often regulated by the state of their engagements as by the determinations of their own will. He sent immediately for Sir Amias, who, somewhat surprised at the summons, and having an apprehensive anticipation of what it might relate to, would have declined attending; but Ralph Hastings, who happened to be present when the messenger came, urged him to go at once.

"You have no choice, let his business be what it may," said the squire; "and what have you to dread? Is it not true that your

nephew meddles with the feats? Has he not acknowledged the consciousness of a traitor's guilt, by his sudden and extraordinary flight? Yes, go, and leave me to see what is to come."

"It may," replied his patron hesitatingly, "it may be for something altogether different."

"It may," responded Ralph Hemlep.

"But," resumed the knight, "but if it should be concerning this unfortunate affair."

"Then there goes," [illegible]

"And yet I cannot divine what it is that he should want with me."

"Nor can I," said Ralph Hemlep; "but go to him, and you shall soon know."

"It is singular, that to-day, after so many strange things have chanced to me, that a summons so unaccountable should have been sent to me."

"Misfortunes never come singly," said the squire, looking at him thoughtfully from under his lofty beetled brows; adding, after a short

poured in the sooner you hunt the more the better."

"Worst Hanslap! do you then think that there is danger in the business of this summons?"

"I but fear; every thing to-day has gone so cross. It would seem as if a reckoning was in progress against us."

"You say truly, and I am miserable."

"I thought so," replied Ralph Hanslap, in his most sardonic and peculiar manner; "that it was no purpose to remain here. If there be aught that concerns your welfare in the matter of the message, it beseems a friendly care in the bishop that he would benefit to yourself, therefore I counsel you to hasten time."

"It is certainly as you say, why else indeed should any of the government be otherwise than well inclined towards us? Have I not myself three sons, both by marriage and wedlock, about my person, a good subject I have

paid service beyond the obligations of my tenures, and the more freely on account of this—

"Of what?" said Ralph Hanslap, as the knight paused, scarcely knowing with what terms to finish the sentence.

If Ralph Hanslap had any fluidity of mind, which could at all be said to resemble the movements of passion, it was curiosity; and no earthly thing interested him like the crooked character of his patron; so much indeed did the feeling which it awakened constantly influence him, that it is described by our author as the source, yea, the very element and life of his fidelity and attachment. On the present, as on many other occasions, and therein plainly consisted its quality of passion, he indulged his curiosity even to wounding the object of his solicitude, deriving from the anguish and grief, which the drift of his remarks and interrogatives produced, a strange and morose enjoyment.

"On account of what," said he, "did you pay service beyond your tenures? If the thing has been remarked, the bishop, as Chancellor, may desire to know why it has been so—perhaps it is for this he requests to see you—you had better go to him—I advise you to go."

"No," replied the knight; "he will ask me nothing on that head; but if he does, is there not a prompt answer in my loyalty, seeing I possess not that robust fortitude of body which is needful to those who give personal attendance on the king in the field."

"But it was not for your infirm health that you gave so much free service. I have never heard you say what it was for. It was on account of ——" you said.

Sir Amias made no reply; but turned abruptly away, vext at being so probed, and disposed to be angry;—a stronger motive for forbearance, however, checked the impulse; and in the course of a minute or two he said—

"I will go; but something assures me that no good will come o't."

"I think so too."

"Why then do you so urge me?"

"Because by your refusing I see nothing served; and this message is a part of the day's fortunes. Without astrology one may tell that the stars in their courses are fighting against us."

The knight was surprised at the remark, and a momentary cast of paleness flitted over his countenance.

"You bode superstitiously, Hanslap; what has come over you?" and he attempted to smile; but the squire, without altering the rigid composure of his features, replied—

"I wish the day were well at an end."

"What did you say?"

"I wish the day were well at an end."

"And what then," rejoined Sir Amias, "if it were?"

"We should then know the business that

has made the king's chancellor so absolutely request your attendance."

"Was the message then so peremptory? Think you that he has heard any thing of the story?"

"What story?"

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the knight peevishly; "you trifle,—but you have license from my indecision. I will go,—whatever the business may be, I cannot now do else. I wish we had been both in France when this message came. Every thing to-day works against us."

"I have said so," replied Ralph Hanslap, with his characteristic austerity of aspect.

Sir Amias felt as if he should reprove this constant harping on the same disagreeable string, but he repressed his feelings, and moved towards the door of the chamber in which this conversation had taken place, intending, in obedience to the message, to proceed directly to the residence of the bishop.

But Ralph Hanslap, without moving from the spot on which he was standing, said seriously—

"Sir Amias."

"Well!" exclaimed the knight, turning round; "what now?—what more would you say?"

"Nothing," replied Ralph hesitatingly; "but if aught come to pass that you do not like, perhaps you will warn me by some sign, to the end that I may keep aloof;—absence at this time may be the best service I can do you. I shall not be dull in reading the significance of any token that you send."

"We are not yet come to that," said the knight drily; but at heart he was greatly agitated; for he felt this intimation from his old confidant as if the best prop he had were giving way;—he added, however,—"If you are so much alarmed, Hanslap, I beseech you to secure your safety at once. If the worst come to the worst, it is but the proof of what

I have long desired,"—and he said the word with a sigh,—"I mean evidence of the lady's marriage. I shall cheerfully renounce every thing on that being made clear. But we waste time by this talk, Hanslap;"—and in so saying, he quitted the room, leaving the other, notwithstanding the firmness of his countenance and the stability of his mind, evidently perplexed, and vascillating between apprehension and curiosity, whether he should retire from London, or remain to see the issue of a drama, in the plot of which he had so long borne a principal a part.

CHAPTER IV.

OMENS.

A sudden darkness hath defaced the sky,—
The winds are crept into their caves for fear;
The leaves move not; the world is hushed and still;
The birds cease singing; and the wandering brooks
Murmur no wonted greeting to their shores;—
Silence attends some wonder, and expecteth
The Heavens should pronounce some prophesy.

CAPEL'S PROTUSIONS.

THERE are times and eras in the fortunes of men, when the mind discovers a mystical similitude between the appearance of external nature and the aspect of its own destinies. Our author begins the chapter to which this one corresponds, with some curious reflections on these hallucinations and glimpses of apocalypse,—remarking, that such soft and silent breathings of prophecies concerning only our-

selves, are oftenest felt in spring and autumn, and that the auguries which instruct our sympathies, on such occasions shed their solemnest influences in the dim obscurity of the morning or of the evening twilight.

"Moreover, it hath been oftentimes noted," he says, "that a strange harmony has governance over both the tenor of the anticipations and the circumstances in which the inspiration enters the heart; and there are those who can tell, by the time in which the spirit discerns the omens, how long the hereafter of their days shall be in light or in shadow."

"If it be," to use his own language, with as little of the obsolete expression as possible; "If it be, that the fit falleth on the man while he is abroad betimes in the fields, in that delectable season when the may is in blossom, as the midland villagers prettily call the hawthorn, then will he have blithe hopes, and a bright, though far-off mirage of prosperity;—like the vista of a fair and

plenteous grange seen through the opening of some neighbouring wood; and, in like manner, if it overcome him at the close of the day, when the may stands shivering in the rags of her sere and yellow vestment, holding in her lean hand crude and sullen berries, whereof only hunger constrains the birds to eat, then shall he have cold assurances of clouds and cares, and the fast coming on of dark adversity."

It does not, however, always happen, that these foretastes of futurity are felt in the fields; at least, it appears to have been otherwise with Sir Amias de Crosby, who, in his way to Winchester-house, happened, as the Chronicler says, to have had a marvellous experience of that sort; indeed, the reflections to which we have been referring, are introduced as a prelude, and evidently with regard to that occurrence.

He had continued the inconclusive conversation with Ralph Hanslap, described in the

foregoing chapter, until the day was far spent. The sun had set before he left his own house for the episcopal residence, the distance to which was not great; for, in those days, the bishops of Winchester resided in the city.

Whether to prepare his mind for the interview, of which he apprehended so much and could divine so little, instead of taking the shortest road, on reaching the street he passed out at the Bishop's-gate, and walked across the fields, beyond the city walls, till he reached a small postern entrance, which was many years after beautified and enlarged, and became celebrated as the ventrical into Moorfields.

In the course of this short tour, he passed several bands of apprentices, and other sons of the city, amusing themselves at skittles, and similar games of chance and dexterity, wrangling and abusing each other as the casts and stakes from time to time went adverse or favourable. The city wall on the left extended

long and dark, but not without some tint here and there of picturesque beauty, especially where the yellow evening light struck upon the angles of the towers, or streamed through the embrasures of the bartisans. Along the top of the wall, on the curtain between the towers, groups of city madams were seen airing, and scraps of apparel hung dangling on poles projecting from the loop-holes of the towers. The lance of the warden on the top of Aldersgate was seen glancing like a torch, as he now and then turned, or paused in his pacing, to look over the battlement when any little accident happened among the passengers below.

The air and the evening were bland and still; and, to a mind undisturbed by the controversy of good and evil wishes, there was that moderated and subsiding murmur of city toils and cares, which is often a more effectual soother of the harrassed spirit than the rural sounds of the curfew-bell, intermingled with

the lowing of cattle, and the distant churme of rustic gossips at the style, or the occasional giggle of the ruddy milkmaiden, returning from her cows with the lusty smock-frocked hind that trysted himself to carry her pails.

But the incidents of the day had untuned Sir Amias de Crosby from any accordance with the melody of evening pastimes. His brows were knotted, his eyes cast on the ground, and the skein of his thoughts ravelled. His ear was but open to the discordant voices of the wrangling gamesters, and he heard nor saw aught in the scene around him but the din of quarrel, and the menacing hands and fierce countenances of sharpers foiled in their knavery.

His mind, however, was for some time so wholly engaged with its own conflicting cogitations, that these things made no particular impression until he had almost reached the gate, where he intended to return to the town. There, in passing a knot of some four

or five slovenly and greasy artizans, he was startled by a voice, saying, close behind him, in an emphatic whisper, "Go no farther; you are discovered." He looked round, and saw a slouched, sallow-faced, sharp-eyed young man, whose apparel was seemingly more torn in brawls than wasted by wearing. He was conferring with another of a more juvenile air, and of a less dissolute tarnish, either in dress, appearance, or complexion. They had been dicing with others, and had lost in partnership. The incident itself was trifling, but the expression chimed ominously with the reflections of the knight, and there was something in the look of the elder knave, that reminded him of the cool, collected, imperturbable equanimity of Ralph Hanslap, a circumstance in itself that struck the deeper, in consequence of the symptoms of desertion which that faithful adherent had so unexpectedly shown.

Sir Amias had passed but a little way far-

ther on towards the gate, ruminating on the admonition he had overheard, and which he irresistibly applied to himself, when he was stopped by a boy in tatters, running against him from an enraged and furious woman with a distaff in her hand. The boy took shelter behind him, and Sir Amias, to prevent the woman from felling the fugitive with her distaff, raised his arm, and interposed himself between them.

"The widow's curse be upon you," cried the beldam, "for screening the thief of the orphan's bread!"

Sir Amias sprang aside at the malediction, as if he had trodden upon an adder. His limbs shook, his teeth chattered, and his whole frame was convulsed with an inward working of alarm, the more dreadful by the effort he made to withstand it. Without looking again at the woman, or regarding the object of her frenzy, he hastened forward, and passed under the portcullis into the gate-

way; but there he was again stopped by a crowd of persons bearing the corpse of a man on an unhinged door. It was covered with a sheet, but the linen was marked in several places with blood; one hand of the dead man lay exposed, and it was also clotted with blood. The outline of the features and throat, imperfectly seen under the cover of the sheet, was, however, still more appalling.

"He did it with his own hand," said one of the spectators to Sir Amias, whom he had observed looking at the body with an extraordinary degree of awe and interest.

"For what reason? For what cause?" exclaimed a bystander.

"It was the best thing he could do for himself," replied the other, adding, "they are going to bury him in the cross-roads beyond the walls."

"Look at it," said a third party to Sir Amias, and he showed him a knife. "How should you like to try its edge on your gullet."

The knight reeled with horror and disgust from the familiar mechanic who thus so coarsely addressed him; and pushing through the crowd, he quickened his steps to Winchester-house, almost unconscious of the road he took, and reached the gate of the mansion without once looking behind.

CHAPTER V.

THE LEAVES ARE FALLING.

So writhes the mind remorse hath riven,
Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame—within it death.

THE GIAOUR.

THE bishop was sitting in the oriel window at the upper end of his hall, when the arrival of Sir Amias was announced. Several illuminated missils, which he was examining, lay on a table before him, and the casket of jewels, of which mention has been so often made, was standing among them. When informed that the knight was come, he placed one of the books on the lid of the casket, and the others in seeming disorder around it, so as to conceal it from the sight, at the same time

ordering the domestic, who announced Sir Amias, to set candles on the table.

"I crave your pardon, Sir Amias de Crosby, for troubling you to come here," said the shrewd and wary prelate, cautiously, as he advanced to receive him, "but my only leisure is in the evening at this time, and what I have to say is not a matter of such import as to deserve attention in the hours of graver business."

Sir Amias was man-of-the-world enough not to be thrown off his guard by the urbanity of this reception; but he made no answer, saving a respectful inclination of the head as he passed towards a chair on the opposite side of the table, where the bishop signified to him with his hand to be seated, sitting down at the same time himself.

"In the matter of a suit of some standing in the Chancery," resumed the bishop, "I am informed that your deceased brother, Lord Edmund, baron of Rothelan, to whose

moveables and manors you succeeded at his death, was a party to certain covenants with an Italian woman; and I would from yourself know the particulars, especially as the point in question touches the honour of a noble family."

Notwithstanding the vague obscurity of this artful address, there was yet something in it which Sir Amias did not like; he however replied, with perfect sincerity, that he really was not aware of the business alluded to.

"There is, indeed, my Lord," said he, "an Italian lady, to whom my brother was much attached; he would, I believe, have made her his wife had he been permitted to return from the war in which he fell."

"The affair in question," replied the Bishop, "may relate to her. Is it known where that lady resides?"

"She is at present in London," said the knight, with some degree of perturbation;

and, as if overcome by some inexplicable constraint, he added, "I have seen her to-day, but she hath taken a strange prejudice against me."

"I do not desire," interposed the bishop calmly, and with something of coldness and reserve in his manner, "to ask any questions regarding your domestic concerns, Sir Amias, farther than to ascertain if the lady of whom you speak can be the same person as the one that I mean.—Her name.—

"Albertina—She's of the Ferragio family, there are few more noble, as I have heard, in Florence."

"That is the name," said the bishop; "it must be the same lady. How is it that she is in England, and not with her family?—but now, I do recollect of having heard some years ago, that at Lord Edmund's death you acted with unexampled generosity towards his mistress. Was it this Italian lady?"

"I would have done more," replied the

knight with a bow, somewhat relieved in his anxiety by hearing the prelate speak in terms of such commendation of his conduct; "but she was not to be satisfied with less than the acknowledgment of her son as my brother's lawful heir."

"Her son! she was not married, and yet had a son! Ah! Sir Amias, I doubt not, if she is a person of that sort, that you have reaped but little gratitude for your goodness."

"Had she been indeed his wife," said the knight, thrown entirely off his guard by this cordiality and sympathy, "doubtless she might long ago have procured proofs of the fact from Florence."

"That she has not," rejoined the bishop, "is certainly strong presumption against it; and I should think, by her family leaving her unregarded so long in England, they had their own reasons for neglecting her."

This was oil to all the agitation of the

knight's bosom; it calmed the anxieties which the message had roused, and smoothed the ridges of his troubled thought into such tranquillity, that he became perfectly at his ease, and continued the conversation with a full enjoyment of the most satisfactory self-complacency.

"But what became of the child? I think you said it was a son," added the bishop.

"I have heard but little of them for many years," replied Sir Amias. "In the confusion of a fire that happened in my house, the boy was accidentally, I believe for safety, taken away by some one in the crowd. His mother, until he was found, accused me of the abduction. What afterwards befell them; how they have lived or fared since she quitted Crosby-house, I can only guess at."

The bishop, at this juncture, as if unaware of what he did, lifted the book from off the lid of the casket, and placing his forefinger

between the leaves, rested his hand on it, as he said, "But you saw the lady to-day, after the lapse of so many years; how did that happen?"

The sight of the casket had, however, fascinated the eyes of Sir Amias; he discovered, by the arms emblazoned on the lid, that it was the same which had been abstracted from the lady's possession, and which he had himself afterwards sold to Adonijah.

"You know that casket," said the bishop, "but it belonged, or I am mistaken, to your brother. These, I understand, are the bearings of Lord Edmund. It has come into my hands in a very singular manner."

Sir Amias looked up at the bishop for a moment; he was unable to speak, he felt as if lightnings were flashing around him, and the earth shuddering beneath.

Without noticing his emotion, the prelate continued with a tone of firmness that was almost stern—

"A Jew brought me this casket, when the king, seven years ago, went north to repel the Scots after the sack of Durham. I doubt not, Sir Amias, that you well remember the time, for the very same day on which Adonijah, whom you know well, delivered these gems into my custody, for a purpose that I doubt not you can comprehend, you did yourself place a fair and comely boy with the Lord Moubray for a page. That boy was your brother's son."

"It was on the soliciting of that Jew," replied Sir Amais, rallying from his alarm, "that I placed the child with the Lord Moubray; but I knew not then that he was the Lady Albertina's son."

"There, Sir Amias," said the bishop, "I believe you; but it was not long till you, by some means, discovered the truth. Now, sir, I demand to be informed what afterwards became of that child?"

"I have not been with him," rejoined the

knight hastily. "The Lord Mowbray, I should think, can best answer as to what befell him."

The bishop, seeing him thus rallying to bear out the business with a bold front, looked at him with a composed and compassionate countenance, and then said mildly, but with a firm accent—

"There is in this mystery, Sir Amias de Crosby, more known to me than even your fears tell you, I have discovered. As a knight and gentleman, untarnished hitherto by the blame of any unworthy machination, I would spare you from public indignity. It is in your own power to clear yourself from a foul stain, and to let you know this, I caused you to be invited hither, that I might counsel you to do so, and to warn you, that unless some atonement is made, and that speedily, I shall not fail to report your cruel persecution to the king. I see enough in your equivocation to convince me, that you do believe the

unfortunate lady was your brother's wife, and that her son is the lawful heir of his honours and domains. Make restitution, therefore, with all speed, or assuredly now, neither power, quest, nor diligence, shall be wanting to vindicate the justice so grievously wronged in this business."

The spirit of Sir Amias was, however, rather chafed than cowed by this proud language, and he replied with the emphasis of anger—

"Whatever you may have been told, my lord, the bastard has been taken in arms with the Scots, and was this day brought to London with the other prisoners."

"I have nothing farther to say at this time," rejoined the bishop, with a calm and contemptuous smile; "but only this, Sir Amias, you are discovered."

The words were a peal of terror to his conscience. They were the same that sounded so ominously in his ear from the fraudulent

gamesters. Still, however, he might have withstood, perhaps have even resented the prelate's sarcasm, had not that just and virtuous minister added, "The widow's curse hath ever a terrible audience in heaven, and the bread withheld from the orphan was never yet known to nourish the dishonest possessor."

The colour, at these words, forsook the face of Sir Amias; his lips became livid, and his eyes glared and glittered, without speculation; he attempted to speak, but his tongue clove as it were to the roof of his mouth, and he fell back on the chair, overwhelmed by shame, remorse, and the fearful consternation of superstitious dread.

The bishop beheld him for a moment with aversion and indignation, partly mistaking his agitation for anger; but the contortions of contrition and horror were so manifest, that he soon regarded him with feelings more allied to mercy. With a slight and solemn

movement of his hand, throwing his eyes at the same time heavenward, he retired to his private chamber, directing the servants, whom he called from the bottom of the hall as he passed, to see the knight conveyed in safety to his own house.

CHAPTER VI.

A CAMP.

Bright glow'd the sun, and bright the burnish'd mail
Of thousands ranged, whose pace to song kept time;
And bright the glare of spears, and gleam of crests,
And flaunt of banners flashing to and fro
The noon-day beams.

SOTHEBY'S SAUL.

IN the meantime, Rothelan having embarked in one of the vessels bound with re-enforcements for the royal army, then lying before Calais, was landed at the camp in the course of the following morning. What he had hitherto seen of war was in its rudest character; even in the battle of Neville's Cross, important as it was, and involving the fate and liberties of the king and kingdom of Scotland, the levies on both sides had been hastily

gathered; and though there was no lack of bravery in their hearts, nor of vigour in their arms, there was yet but little in their equipage of that pride, pomp, and circumstance, which makes ambition virtue.

Rothelan, with the exception indeed of that battle, might be said never to have seen aught whatever of glorious war; for his forays with Sir Gabriel de Glowr along the English marches, though requiring not less valour and adventure than any exploit performed with the vantage of royal banners, were yet, as the Chronicler says, "but as the monosyllables of a child's lesson; having no import of chivalry in them; being altogether as words single and apart, without any pervading sense of the elevating spirit of instructive eloquence." In sooth to say, though there certainly was in those raids and enterprises no lack of the consonants of war,—such as sound best with steel, strokes, and struggling, in the boasts and brags of freebooters crowing

of their cruelties,—yet it must be confessed, that the love of gear more than of glory was the chief stimulant of Border heroism. In the English camp before Calais, however, where the victors of Cressy were assembled, and the very business of destruction was hallowed by the favour of saints, and rewarded with guerdons that gave renown to the gainers, the warmth of a new spirit was destined to animate the bosom of the young hero, and to impel him to seek adventures, whereof the profit should be reckoned by the number of wounds that he brought off with success.

As soon as he was put on shore, he hastened towards the royal tent, which he readily discovered by its superior magnitude, and the standard, with the arms of France and England quartered, unfurling in the morning breeze beside it. The sight of so many new and splendid objects of military pageantry on all sides soon arrested his speed; and while he was yet but half way between the beach and

the encampment, he halted, and gazed with delight and wonder around.

The fluttering of the ensigns, and the twirling of the pennons, which marked the extent of each respective commander's lines; the pyramids of lances and spears in front of the tents; the vast array of shapely pavilions, which, in a continued crescent, encompassed the town; squadrons of cavalry at exercise; grooms and squires busily breaking new chargers on the skirts of the camp; piles of mail near armourers' forges for repair; drums lying on the ground, while the boys they belonged to were wrangling at some game of hazard; on all sides the soldiers lounging, some half dressed, and others ready in their fighting trim; and the towers and walls of Calais, bristling with spears and armour glittering to the rising sun, presented a scene of activity and grandeur, of which he had previously formed no distinct conception. But while his eye was hastily ranging from one object to another,

he soon saw that the business of the assailants was suspended, and that the battering machines, even where they had evidently shaken the walls, were withdrawn, and committed to the care of but single sentinels. . . . As he was thus gazing around on the encampment, he saw, at some distance, a knight passing along on foot, in whose appearance he felt an immediate prepossession. It seemed to him, that his air and countenance (for he wore his beaver up) were familiar to him; but he could not recall to mind where they had formerly met, and yet they had assuredly before encountered one another, and in some remarkable circumstances; for the same figure was associated with reminiscences of alarms and the hurricane of warlike preparations—lights moving to and fro—and a bewildering congregation of sights and sounds—from which, though his memory was filled, he could disentangle no distinct image. . . . . .

The pleasure which Rothelan instinctively

received, at seeing one to whom he was attracted as by some sense of early companionship, emboldened him to advance, and to put some questions to the knight respecting the apparent suspension of the siege. Pleased with the bold and gallant bearing of one still so young, the stranger answered with encouraging courtesy, and told him, that it was in consequence of the king having resolved to spare the town, but to starve the inhabitants.

"In this," said he, "his majesty gives himself too much to anger, accounting the Calais-men as obstinate rebels, whereas they have never yet admitted his claim to be their king, however good in law and backed by arms it may be. Truly, they are brave worthies, and stand stoutly to his threats."

"I think," said Rothelan, "that the king does wisely in sparing the town. It seems to be a rare place, and I doubt not there are both well-furnished kists and coffers in it."

"Who are you," exclaimed the knight,

"with so lordly an air, and so fresh too, as it would seem by your beard, in war, that speaks so sordidly of the glory which will be in the taking of Calais? By our Lady! young man, nature hath taken more pains with thy limbs than thy likings. She hath made thee of the shell of a knight and the kernel of a burgher. I would pawn my knighthood that there are old men in your town of better stuff than the best substance about thee."

Rothelan was mortified to hear himself rated so low, and by one of so noble an aspect; but his Border education had not taught him, as the Chronicler has remarked, to discriminate very nicely the difference between fighting for glory or for gain.

While they were standing, says our author, thus pertinently discourising, there was seen, at some distance, a rushing toward the king's tent; and soon after an officer appeared on the walls, and the king, attended by many of his nobility, came out of his pavilion and went

to parley. The stranger also went forward, followed by Rothelan, to listen.

"The burgesses," said the officer, addressing himself from the wall to the king, "have agreed to surrender the town and castle to your majesty, if it will stand with your royal pleasure to grant them their life and goods."

"They will do so, will they?" exclaimed King Edward; "then, forsooth, they may dispose, elect, and propose, as they list. No: tell them, sir knight, that having refused our clemency when it was offered, they shall not have it now when they desire it. We will accept of nothing but the most absolute and prostrate submission. So go back and say, it is not with us that they have now to fight, but with Famine. Let them try whether our swords or their own hunger hath the sharpest edge."

The officer, however, instead of retiring at this rough denial, held his station on the wall,

and expostulated against a resolution so harsh and inexorable.

"I entreat your majesty," said he, "to consider that we are the subjects of the King of France, and have, as ordered by our liege lord, done our best, by head and hand, to defend these walls. It is hard that our loyalty, which, from the great spirit of so mighty a monarch, might have hoped for more courtesy, should be imputed to us as offences. But since nothing, sire, will content your majesty but such abject submission, we will yet hold out; and the last of us, yea, the last boy in all Calais, will rather perish fighting, than yield to conditions that are intended for dishonour."

There was something in the sentiment of this noble defiance that made the heart of Rothelan glow with feelings before unfelt, like the seed of a beautiful alchymy, transmuting his Border admiration of fierceness and

strength into reverence for the more precious virtues of heroic valour and dignity.

"Know any of you the name of that Calais knight?" said the king, turning round to his officers. "By my troth, he brags bravely."

Some one replied, that it was Jean de Vienne.

"I have heard of his valour and knightly courage," observed the king; and advancing a step or two in front, he said aloud to Jean de Vienne—

"For your sake, sir knight, we are content to abate somewhat of our displeasure—we concede terms:—say to the burgesses, that if they well send me six of the best of themselves, with halters on their necks, to be disposed of as we may think fit, they shall be spared, and their submission, as proposed, accepted."

With this the king retired, and went back into his tent, while the officer descended from the wall into the town.

The parley being thus ended, Rothelan

addressed himself diffidently to the knight, at whose side he had continued standing: "I would fain serve with you," said he, "to learn this knightly art of war."

"Beshrew me, but it is a true caglit," replied the stranger, eyeing him very earnestly: "What are you? By your tongue, I should think you a Scot, and yet you have but little of the Scottish phrase, nor much of the look either."

"Whatever I may be," said Rothalan with a modest firmness, "let the metal of the blade be determined by the testing;" and then he added, with a respectful diffidence, "My story, sir knight, is one that will take time to tell, and credit, before acquaintanceship, to believe. I am here alone—friendless—yea, in the jeopardy of being wrongfully accused of treason, of which, however, I deny not that I am guilty,—yet, I will say boldly, traitor I am none, nor shall I be found unworthy of the boon and favour I solicit."

"You speak riddles—tell me how you are here alone?" replied the baron.

"I came in quest of the Lord Mowbray, and to beg his livery and patronage; but I shall be content if you will accept my service."

"No doubt, because by that you will have what you wish. Did you not know that I am Mowbray?"

"I almost thought so," exclaimed Rothelan, with much delight. An immediate explanation took place; and the baron, not a little pleased to have in this manner recovered, in an improved form, the bold and prankful stripling, the loss of whom he had so long regretted, conducted him to his tent, and was not satisfied till he had informed him of all his adventures.

CHAPTER VII.

A LESSON.

The citizens throng—the press is hot,
They talk together;—I hear them not:
The bell has toll'd—the wand they break;
My arms they pinion till they ache!—
They force me down upon the chair!—
The neck of each spectator there
Thrills, as though itself would feel
The headsman's stroke—the sweeping steel.

FAUST, BY LORD F. GOWER.

WHEN Rothelan had concluded the narrative of his adventures, the Lord Mowbray proposed to conduct him at once to the king, of whose early interest in his misfortunes he gave him some account, describing what had happened at Werk Castle, and how the famous Countess of Salisbury had procured a pur-

suivant to be sent into Scotland to ransom him.

But, in the meantime, Jean de Vienne having reported to the burgesses of Calais the conditions on which King Edward would accept their surrender, there had been great panic and consternation in the town; no one for some time being willing to offer himself for the expiatory sacrifice. But in the end, says the Chronicler, there arose up the richest and most substantial alderman of the whole city, named Eustace de St Pierre, and thus spoke to the other magistrates who were assembled to receive the English king's answer.

"It would surely be a great cruelty to suffer so many Christians as are in this town to perish either by sword or famine when means are left to save them. I am well persuaded, that whoever prevents the mischief cannot fail to render an acceptable service to Heaven. For my part, I repose so much con-

fidence in the goodness of God, that, if I die in the endeavour to save our poor famishing fellow-citizens, I am assured he will receive me into his mercy; and therefore I will be the first to offer my head to the stern King of England—a willing sacrifice for my dear country."

This heroic resolution moved and melted the hearts and spirits of all present. Some wept aloud; some fell upon their knees; and some embraced that venerable man, unable to control the enthusiasm of gratitude and admiration with which he had affected them. Presently another honest burgher, by name Jean D'Ayre, also rose up, and said—"In this honourable danger I will keep my friend company;" and then Jaque de Wissart, who was accounted one of the wealthiest and most prosperous burgesses in all the town, declared that he was willing to share their fate; the same did his brother;—and such was the emulation which this high virtue inspired in

all around, that it was difficult to determine which other two should be permitted to share with them the immortality of such unparalleled martyrdom.

The controversy being, however, decided, and the six voluntary victims having put themselves into the suppliant condition which King Edward had commanded, they went forth to the gate, bare-headed, in their shirts, with halters about their necks, ready for the executioner. All the people of the town followed them, wailing and lamenting;—the bells were tolled, and requiems sung;—women went to and fro wringing their hands;—children stood wondering. But those noble burghers walked onward with serene countenances and elevated hearts.

The cries, the lamentations, and the tolling of the bells, were heard in the English camp; and the rumour came rising from all sides, that the Calais men were sending out their six best citizens as an atonement for the

obstinacy with which they had resisted the king. The soldiers ran in crowds towards the gate, but were checked by the clamour of trumpets suddenly sounded, ordering them to arms;—confusion and anxiety reigned. King Edward was troubled; for he expected no such magnanimous compliance with his demand. His nobles, no less astonished, stood in silence, offering him no counsel.—Rothelan and the Lord Mowbray hastened to the front of the royal tent, to which the crowd from the town was seen slowly advancing to the dismal music of burial bells, and the mournful cries of the woful spectators that thronged the walls.

Having taken their station on a knoll, from which they could see all that was to be done, they beheld Jean de Vienne coming forward on a little lean horse,—for he was lame, having received a wound in the thigh in a sally some time before,—and behind him the six worthies of the worthiest of Calais.

When he was come into the king's presence, he surrendered to him his sword and the keys of the place, and, with tears in his eyes, presented Eustace de St Pierre and his heroic friends.

The king, at that moment, calling to mind the singular constancy with which the citizens of Calais had so long resisted him, the damage and detriment that had been done to his fleets and ships from their port, and, above all, their denial of his right to the crown of France, exclaimed, "I doubt not there is fraud in this. These men are not as you say, but servile grooms, perhaps malefactors; let them suffer then for the trick."

Eustace de St Pierre, with a firm countenance, denied that they were less than they pretended.

"Then, if it be so," cried the king, waxing wroth at this rebuke, "let the stipulation stand good. We take possession of the town in peace, and will spare the lives and goods of

the inhabitants; but for you and your companions, take the reward you are entitled to. Soldiers, see it is bestowed."

While a band of those who were the executioners to the camp advanced to remove them, a great shouting was heard among the crowd in the rear of the surrounding multitude; and immediately a great movement, and a falling back from side to side, was seen opening an avenue for a lady of an august and royal appearance to advance. It was Philippa, Queen of England, who, after the Scottish prisoners had been conducted to London, came to join the king at Calais. She had been disembarked at the time when the mournful procession came forth from the gate; and learning, in her way towards the royal tent, the woful martyrdom that was intended, came rushing on foot to stop the cruel work.

Breathless with alarm and haste, she fell at the king's feet, grasped his hand, and wet

ting it with her tears, implored him, with broken words and eloquent sighs, to forbid the orders he had given.

"What is that I hear?" she vehemently exclaimed. "O let me, without offence, plead for the lives of these good men. They are, it is said, but plain burghers,—burghers did I say? they are martyrs that, to the end of time, should be chronicled for worthiness above all that is vaunted of virtue in Greek and Roman story. O, my lord, in this great business be true to your own great character, and look at these honest merchants as brave soldiers who have nobly defended a forlorn port. Think you, that in this holy duty the spirit of renown has not been kindled in them as pure and fervently as it burns in your own breast? I beseech you, respect it in their plain honesty. O look not on their garbs; think not of their vocations; but regard them as their worth merits. Then will those civil weeds and unwarlike garments

shine to you as proudly as the panoply of the most famous knights, and make you honour them as brave men should be honoured, thereby increasing the lustre of your own hitherto unclouded and uneclipsed renown."

A shout of applause and admiration burst from all who heard her thus plead; and the king was so touched by her earnest eloquence and impassioned entreaty, that, as he raised her into his embrace with the one hand, he waved to those who were removing the prisoners to desist.

"Ah, madam," said he, as he looked relentingly upon her, "I would you had been some where else at this time, for you have so tenderly conjured me, that I am not able to deny your request. I resign them into your hands to do with them as you think best."

She immediately caused the halters to be taken from their necks, and honourably set them at liberty.

"It was then," says our author, "that the

young spirit of Rothelan was taught the golden sentiments of chivalry. Born with all courage that becomes a man and a soldier, of an innate courtesy of disposition, modest withal and temperate, yet, but for these high scenes of knightly inspiration, he had been as the gem in the rough casting of the mine, which, although in that condition, no less precious than the polished stone of the diadem, is still but of little note and estimation among the commonalty of the world.

CHAPTER VIII.

A CRISIS.

O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O timid soul; that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
All may be well.

HAMLET.

IN the meantime, Sir Amias de Crosby, after returning to his own house from the interview with the Bishop of Winchester, had, according to the vehement expression of our author, been so set upon by the adversary of the soul, that he was for some time like a demoniac, acting the extravagance of one utterly bereft

of all reason, and giving himself up to the wildest and wickedest suggestions. That outward show of an urbane temperament, for which he had been so distinguished, entirely fell away from him. He felt the sting of the bishop's admonition rankling in his heart. Conscious that the veil which he had so long worn with honour and homage had been plucked off, and that his natural deformity was seen with a just abhorrence, he was moved as by the spirit of a strange revenge against all mankind.

He thought of the estrangement of his lady's affections; he recalled to mind every incident of that conversation when she first suspected his machinations, and each was as a poisoned arrow shot into his bosom, exasperating him to hate her with the rage of a burning heart and grinding teeth.

In the midst of the whirlwinds of that frantic indignation, the image of his daughter came like a star between the hurrying clouds

of a storm, but not as an omen of peace. Bright as it was, and beautiful, the light of its loveliness was fire to his spirit, and he endeavoured to forget her gentle remonstrances, as the fiend of night, that, ever muffled in darkness, retires with an askance and lurid eye from the glorious presence of the morning—dreading, flying, and hating, while afraid.

He thought of Ralph Hanslap, not as an agent whom he had himself chosen, but as the tempter who had achieved his ruin. He said to his conscience, "But for that man I had not fallen into this perdition;" and the falsehood was flung back, as it were, into his face with handfuls of burning and scorn.

He paced his chamber, and grew hoarse in his mutterings, transported in the delirium of passion to feel as if the stern bishop was strangling in his grasps.

He could imagine no annihilation speedy enough to consume the Lady Albertina. He thought of flames and roaring furnaces, and

all other imaginable means of eternal extinction and obliteration. But the Jew—the mysterious Jew—and Rothelan, as an avenger; —the clamours of the world; the derision, at his detection of others as similarly guilty, maddened him to such a pitch, that he rushed in despair to dash out his brains, when a shrill and fearful shriek behind arrested him like an instantaneous enchantment.

It was from his afflicted daughter. She was in the room when he came in; but the obscurity of the evening and his perturbation had prevented him from observing her. The deep and dreadful mutterings with which he entered, overawed, and rendered her unable to address him. She heard the progress of his rage, and listened to the inarticulated menaces of his inflamed spirit, as if they had been the sounds of an earthquake, till the imprecations on himself made her spring forward to stop him in his purpose.

Her scream had been heard through all the house, and before Sir Amias could discover by whom his fearful passion had been witnessed, the door was opened, and his lady, attended by the servants with lights, appeared.

Beatrice was standing near her father, with her hands clasped, pale, wild, and terrified; and while her mother looked at him, she required no explanation of the cause of the alarm.

In the ecstacy of his frenzy, he had torn the ruff from his throat and the vest from his bosom. His countenance was ghastly, and his hair as if it had been wetted;—his eyes were distended, and the hollow under them shaded with a cadaverous and jaundiced blackness:—his lips were covered with froth, slightly tinged with blood. He breathed and panted, as if he had outrun his strength;—big drops of agony glistened on his forehead; and his arms were stretched down close to his side,

while his colourless hands were spread as if each particular finger had been extended with the energy of some terrible spasm.

The Lady de Crosby could not speak; but she took a light from one of the domestics, and, waving her hand, hastily shut them out as she came forward into the room. Sir Amias, almost in the same moment, as if wildly sensible that he was not in a condition which should be seen, dashed the candle from her hand, and quenched it with a stamp, exclaiming, as with a howl,—"Darkness, darkness! death, death!"

Beatrice, who on seeing her mother had rushed towards her, at these words sank into her arms, and for the space of a minute not a breathing was heard, but only the heavy sound of something slowly laid upon the ground.

The first that broke silence was Sir Amias; he felt the head of his daughter fall motion-

less on his foot. He put down his hand, and it touched her face;—at the same moment his lady drooped her head upon his shoulder, and gave full utterance to her grief.

"Is she dead?" said he, with a hollow and fearful voice, drawing his fingers softly over the still features.—The better feelings of his nature returned at that moment with all a father's anxious tenderness to his heart. In the same instant Beatrice began to revive, and he exclaimed—"Air, air!"—and, running to the window, threw open the casement.

The west-wind came softly and breathingly in, and its genial influence soon completed the restoration. Sir Amias raised his daughter, and carried her to the window, and as she hung upon his arm he looked out into the air. The heavens were calm, and the wakeful stars all abroad in the loveliness of their silent beauty. A few minutes before and he would have shrunk from their

sparkling, as from eyes that were vigilantly observing the secret guilts of the dark earth; but the sense of renewed affection for the pure and gentle creature weeping on his bosom, was to him as the renovating spirit of the spring to the fields and the woods; and in that moment, with tears of contrition, and accents of orisons and humility, he confessed the wrongs he had done; and as he hoped to obtain, by redressing them, the pardon of the widow and her son, he submitted himself to the mercy of Heaven.

Soon after he rose, and committing Beatrice to the care of her mother, he left the room, and went alone to the house of Adonijah, with the intent of restoring to the Lady Albertina her just rights, and to bring her back to Crosby-house. But on reaching the door he found it bolted, and no sign of light or inhabitant within. He knocked several times. No answer was given. At last one of the

neighbours hearing the noise, looked out and told him, the Jew had that evening gone away, no one knew whither, and that his family were abroad with their relations.

END OF PART IV.

ROTHELAN.

PART V.

ROTHELAN.

PART V.

CHAPTER I.

SKIRMISHING.

Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of a cause.
SHAKSPEARE.

AGAIN we find ourselves obliged to acknowledge, that the story of Rothelan does not run altogether quite so clear in THE BOOK as we could have wished; which makes us regret we had not resolved to present it in detached fragments, for no better are they, from which this work is constructed, rather than in that

regular and well-digested form so much to be admired by the reader, who will have the goodness hereafter to do so. For the art of writing tales in fragments,—an art peculiarly modern, and one that shows the superiority of modern over ancient ingenuity, (the ancients knew it not,) is highly advantageous to authors, especially to such as are timed and tasked to particular periods. It saves them a world of thought and consideration, as to the mode and manner of stitching the parts together; and what is far better, it also enables them, by the introduction of blanks and asterisks,—in many cases the most valuable and interesting passages,—to make up a page when there is any lack of matter, or shortcoming of invention.

But we are not permitted to avail ourselves of that ingenious art; nay, more, though at this particular season, most desirous of sending out two rather than three volumes, we are told that the public is such

an unconscionable hydra, that it would now be just as likely to buy a ten-tomd tale of household, in the Richardson style, as a biform historical romance. The poor public, we suspect, is in this, as in many other instances, blamed very unjustly; for we have uniformly observed, that the fashion and form of things are much less considered by it than the substance. Not but that in the management of the circulating libraries, for which all judicious authors now expressly write, there may be some advantage in having books, which, by being in three or more volumes, can be placed with proportional profit in as many different fair hands.—This, however, is a topic that we throw to the political economists, conscious that there is not one of our readers, be he ever so courteous, or she ever so kind, that would not, at this juncture, rather hear what immediately resulted from the contrition of Sir Amias de Crosby, than all that could be said relative to this most imper-

tinent personal digression. But, unfortunately, that is the very thing which our author does not furnish the means of supplying. On the contrary, he opens the fifth part of his Chronicle with an account of the arrival in London of the Lady of Falaside, riding, as we have already described, on a pillion behind Robin-the-louper,—a circumstance, in our opinions, of no particular interest; nor is it indeed a jot more so, to tell us, that, by reason of their long journey and the rough trotting of their horse, she had acquired an anguish that crippled her for many days.

But this anguish, this stroke of Dutch painting, uninteresting as it may be to the reader, and however painful it was to the lady herself, is one of those fine and subtile touches by which the Chronicler shows, in many instances, his acute and recondite knowledge of the world, and of those mysteries of nature which work in the propagation of effects from causes. For it appears that, being so lamed,

on alighting at the Salutation in Aldersgate, then a noted inn among the northern travellers, she requested to be shown into a bed-chamber, which, however, the hostess could not do, all her rooms being previously engaged.

"But," said she, "there is an outlandish lady and a Jew, who came in late last night, and I understand they go away in the morning; perhaps they will accommodate you with the use of one of their apartments."

"A Jew!" exclaimed the Lady of Falaside. "Gude be wi' us,—a Jew! Is't a possibility that ye hae a Jew in the house? We would na let the like o't breathe the breath o' life in Scotland."

The landlady, however, assured her that the Jew was a highly respectable man to all appearance, and that he was as free with his purse as a prince.

"I dinna misdoot that, Mem. Wha has na heard o' their riches? To be sure, in the

gathering, they canna be blamed for meikle honesty. No that I wad fin' fault wi' them for running awa' out o' the land o' Egypt wi' their neighbours' ear-rings, considering how they were tasket to mak bricks without straw, and got no wage. But, for a' that, they're no a folk for a dependence, as may be seen by the effigy of Rachel in the painted window o' Loretto at Musselburgh. There she sits like a clocking hen on her father's idols, and ane o' the wee golden godies, wi' horns out's head, keeking out frae aneath her coat-tail,—a fine morality, as the abbess herself expounded to me in a most particular manner."

Mine hostess of the Salutation did not entirely understand this; but she looked as if she did, which was quite as well; for, actuated by the conciliatory spirit which instinctively instructs all travellers of whatever sex, country, or calling, to make themselves agreeable

to strangers, especially where any point is to be gained, the lady was more than usually affable and urbane, both in her smiles and accents; and, moreover, somewhat beyond her custom, disposed to be garrulous. Accordingly, led on by the intelligent countenance of the hostess, she continued—

"But, though I canna say I have a particularity to see an Israelitish man, I would na object, just for curiosity, to look at it;—what like is't?"

"What will you be pleased to have?" said the landlady, not clearly understanding her; and considering that she had just alighted from a long journey, supposing she spoke of some cordial or refreshment.

But, before the lady had time to make any rejoinder, Adonijah came out of a room, with the Lady Albertina veiled and leaning on his arm; and having locked the door, he was in the act of putting the key into his bosom-pocket, when the landlady said to him—

"This gentlewoman has come off a long journey, and is much fatigued; would you be pleased to allow her the use of one of your chambers?"

"Do I not pay for my chambers?" replied Adonijah. "For what gratitudes is she my creditor, that I should give her chambers? I will give her none. It is for profits to yourself that you do ask this. You shall take the profits in that way from me."

"He's an extortioner," said the Lady of Falaside; but, in moving away from him, Adonijah noticing that she was lame, and walked in evident pain, withdrew his hand, with the key in it, from his bosom, and said—

"And you have come a long journey, good gentlewoman? And you are sore with the hard travel? That is thought for pityful charities?"

The Lady of Falaside, in some degree appeased by the humane and sympathising tone of this address, told him that she had indeed

come a long way, no less than from Scotland.

"This lady," said he, pointing across his breast with the key to the Lady Albertina, —"this lady hath debts to pay to a captive of your country, and we go to make the redemption."

"Till we return," interposed the Lady Albertina, "let her rest, Adonijah, in my room."

But the Jew hesitated, saying aside to her, "There are our baggages, and many things; how can I have contentation of mind to bargain with that Sir Gabriel, if all my valuables be left in the jeopardies of strange hands?"

"Then go you to him alone," replied the Lady Albertina, "and I will remain with the gentlewoman; for she appears much in need of some repose."

"You are full of pleasant compassions, my child," said Adonijah, "and I will let you tarry here while I go;" so saying, he un-

looked the door, and invited the Scottish lady to go in;—the Lady Albertina at the same time, throwing aside her veil, followed.

"I shall make myself swift feet till I come again," said Adonijah retiring; "but that Sir Gabriel is hard to deal with, and a man that hath not known what time counts in a bargain."

"Whatna Sir Gibrel, Mem, does the Jew man mean?—for ye should ken that I am come hither myself for a Sir Gibrel; and a lang road and a sair gate it has been. But it canna be my gudeman, for there's neither Jew nor Gentile in a' the south that's black in his books for plack, boddle, or bawbee."

The Lady Albertina explained what Adonijah meant by the debt, telling her at the same time so much of the story of her son as left the lady in no doubt that the Sir Gabriel alluded to was her own.

"It's an unco tale," said the Lady of Falaside, without, however, disclosing who she

was;—"deed it's very extraordinar; and I dinna wonder that ye mean to be sae grateful to Sir Gibrel, for the pains he was at in teaching your son a' manner of virtue. Trouth, ye can do no less than pay his ransom. I canna but say that the Jew-man—really he's a discreet man that,—I would na hae thought ony Jew would hae been sae meikle o' a Christian as to count such an obligation a debt."

"As a debt I must ever acknowledge it," replied the Lady Albertina; "and but that my friend Adonijah gives the money himself, and perhaps may never be repaid, I would have freely ransomed the Scot."

"And does the Jew-man no mean that?" said the Lady of Falaside, with more eagerness than accorded with the ordinary equanimity of her character.

"No," replied the other; "not altogether; we are anxious to have my son considered as having been a prisoner with the Scots, and

not as having been taken fighting on their side; and for that he would pay a ransom for him; but the Scot, Adonijah fears, may have heard of my son's rank, and will extort more than he can afford."

"And so," said the Lady of Falaside, "the Jew-man would fain make a bargain before the Scot finds out the prize he has had in the laddie. That's very like a Jew;—and where may this Sir Gibrel be, that he's gane sae to traffic wi'?"

The Lady Albertina informed her, that he was lodged with other prisoners in the cloister of St Bartholomew's, Smithfield.

"Is that far off?"

"No, not a great way."

On hearing this the Lady of Falaside alertly rose, notwithstanding her lameness, saying—

"I'll no fash you to bide in for me; and I'm greatly obliged for your civility;"—with

which hasty congee she left the room, and going to the landlady, requested her to send some one to show her the way to the Priory of St Bartholomew.

CHAPTER II.

THE WATERS MEET.

Her mother ran and lyft her up,
And clasp'd her in her arm—
'My child, my child, what doth thee ail?
God shield thy life from harm!'

BÜRGER.

It is here meet that we should throw several things together, in order that we may take up the lapses in the story, which have necessarily occurred from the Chronicler's method of mingling the incidents of the fortunes of Rothelan with the public events of the time.

Immediately after Sir Amias de Crosby had been with the Bishop of Winchester, that prelate, convinced of the whole truth of

the Jew and the lady's story, sent for Adonijah, and told him his thorough persuasion of what he thought. "But," said he, "if Sir Amias persist, which he seems, both by his guilt and his honour obliged to do, I see not how any remedy can be applied. There is no evidence of the marriage; there is even no proof that the young man taken with the enemy is really the lady's son. Sir Amias may deny that he is; how are you prepared to answer him?"

"Has he," exclaimed Adonijah impassionately. "Has he not been with him? Has he not, by many confessions of acknowledgment, enticed him with friendly words to his house? Has he not spoken to him as a kinsman? Did he not seek him in my house for adoption? Was all that dreams, that it may now be denied?"

"Still," replied the bishop, "what you say, though truth, is not sufficient. It is not within the power of law nor of prerogative to

restore the lady and her son to their rights, without proof, unless by the concession of Sir Amias; and I doubt if ever he will make any concession, though the elements of goodness and virtue are not entirely eradicated from his breast. What, however I would counsel you to do, is, look to the preservation of the young man. You say he is gone to the siege of Calais. Sir Amias may discover that. You know, by what he has done, what he may do. Punishment is quick where the king's banner is spread. There will be little sifting of circumstances, if the youth be accused in the camp of what cannot be denied; namely, that he was taken in the ranks of the enemy. I therefore advise you, by all imaginable means, to provide for his safety; and I will give you letters that may serve him for friends till we see what further can be done."

The bishop accordingly wrote letters to certain nobles of the government who were with the king, touching the condition and

circumstances of Rothelan; and Adonijah as soon as he had received them, hastened home, and informed the Lady Albertina of what had passed. Fear was become her custom; when she heard that the bishop thought her son's life in danger, even in the asylum to which he had fled, she grew so earnest and impatient to follow him to Calais, in order to throw herself at the feet of the king, and to implore his majesty's protection, that Adonijah could not withstand her importunity.

What immediate effect the disappointment had on Sir Amias de Crosby, when he found, on going to the house of Adonijah, that they were gone no one knew whither, is, as we have already intimated, not described. No farther particular notice is, indeed, taken of the knight for some time; but it would seem, however resolved he was during the impulses of contrition, to atone for the wrongs and injuries he had done, that, when he afterwards

became calm, and reflected on all the circumstances of the case, the desire to make restitution suffered a considerable abatement.

The shock, however, which the gentle Beatrice had sustained, by witnessing the frightful spasms of his conscience, made an impression that, for several days, corroded deeper and deeper. She could not look at him without shuddering. The recollection of his pallid face, and frothy lips, and glaring eyes, and convulsive breathing, took possession of her imagination, and often, when she was sitting beside her mother, she would suddenly start, and clasp her hands with an involuntary exclamation of horror. Her sleep was without repose, and her dreams made up of the images which formed the dreadful metaphors of her waking ruminations. Her beauty, which was always of a lily and a lunar loveliness, became still more tender in all its attributes. The sweet and gracious intelligence of her countenance, which won more

upon the heart by the pathetic cast of her pensive and sidelong glances than by the exquisite elegance of her features, saddened into a melancholy, which was sometimes heightened with a slight radiance of wildness, more touching than the expression of constant sorrow. Her delicate hands also began to lose their ivoriness, and become ashy pale, and the faint blue meandering lines of her neck and arms rose in their form and deepened in their colour. These symptoms of a wounded heart filled the Lady de Crosby with fear, anxiety, and grief, and deprived her of all interest in the concerns of any other living thing.

Beatrice had for many years been the single object of her mother's affections, the charm of her solitary hours, and as the soft west wind to the invalid, in her hectical meditations on the dereliction from honour in her lord. To witness her decay, and the progress of a malady whose seat was in the spirit, scarcely admitted of any consolation. But though no

medicine could alleviate the disease, the hope that a change of scene, and fresher air, might mitigate its influence, induced her to propose to Sir Amais, that they should remove to Windsor, where great preparations were at that time making to celebrate the victories in France, and the return of the king from Calais.

Here our author, in his usual manner, drops, as it were, the thread of his narrative, and gives a gorgeous description of the banquets and rejoicings, in which we find the name of Rothelan incidentally mentioned, as present at a tournament, in the capacity of squire to the Lord Mowbray,—a circumstance which leads us to conclude, that the journey of the Lady Albertina with Adonijah to Calais, had been in some degree and manner successful. It would appear, however, that nothing farther was there done towards redressing her own wrongs, for she continued to be still befriended by the Jew. How they happened to be residing in

the Salutation, in Aldersgate, when the Lady of Falaside arrived, is not explained; but we are inclined to think they had but just then returned from Calais; because, we gather from different incidental allusions, that much about that period the king came back to England, and we therefore think it probable, as the Lord Mowbray returned at the same time, bringing, of course, Rothelan with him, that the Lady Albertina and Adonijah did not long remain behind, if they really came not before them. But, however this may be, certain it is, that when the De Crosby family went to partake of the enlivening shows and celebrations at Windsor, there was a remarkable confluence of events, all tending to bring the actors together on whom the future progress and ultimate issue of the drama depended.

The only point in this stage of the history which is not clearly set out, is the cause of the none effect of that deep and violent passion of remorse and shame with which Sir Amias was

seized, and which, at that time, promised an immediate and happy termination to all the sufferings of the unfortunate widow. Had Ralph Hanslap retired, or been dismissed from his service, we should have been disposed to conclude, that the knight was truly resolved to repent of what he had committed; but we still see that familiar constantly by his side, marking and watching his every movement with a fixed and serious eye, and that he himself continues in all things as if nothing had happened. However derogatory, therefore, the charge may be to human nature, we fear that Sir Amias de Crosby must be considered as one of those who, whatever anguish they may occasionally suffer from their profitable misdeeds, seldom of their own will indemnify the sufferers.

CHAPTER III.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

When Greek meets Greek then comes the tug of war.
POPE.

OUR author does not appear to be of the number of those who maintain, that the ten lost tribes of Israel came westward and peopled Scotland; but his information on that head is not by any means complete; for, although he appears to have been as well acquainted with the Poems of Ossian as any Highlander his contemporary, he yet has not remarked the Hebraic style of their composition; which, whatever may be said of the Jewish features in the character of the Lowland Scots, especially of lairds, and those who live in borough-towns, is, in our opinion, a strong presumption of the

Abrahamical descent of the Celts. But, without engaging farther at present in this important and interesting controversy, it is certain, that both the Baron of Falaside and his lady proved themselves none degenerated in blood, if they were of Israelitish origin, in treating with Adonijah respecting the ransom of Rothelan.

The lady, as we have related, on discovering the Jew's secret motive for wishing to conclude a speedy bargain with Sir Gabriel, hastened, as soon as she had procured a guide, to the priory of St Bartholomew, where the baron was confined, and reached the gate, notwithstanding her lameness, almost as soon as Adonijah; who there, by appointment, was joined by his brother Shebak. Whether that appointment was made by Adonijah in consequence of finding, in some previous interview, that he was not Greek enough to combat singly the Scottish baron, or for any other cause, reason, or consideration, is not particu-

larly stated: we have only the historical fact, and what passed among the four in discussing the business.

The lady, on being admitted into the cloisters, hastily hobbled past the two Jews, and was conducted by one of the friars to Sir Gabriel, a minute or two before them.

"So, Sir Gibrel," was her salutation, "this is a comfortable lodging ye hae gotten after your fighting."

The baron, who had previously, by letter or message, been apprised of her coming to London, was none afflicted by this pathetic sympathy for his misfortune; he made, however no reply, only darting at her one of the sharpest of those sudden looks from which he derived his surname.

"But," said she, "this is no a time for condolence; I hae come to gi'e you warning —wi' an anguish that canna be described— I redde ye, tak tent how ye bargain wi' the Jewmen; for the Englisher is, as we

aye thought, come of a pedigree, and ye'll no be true to yoursel if ye tak less for him than a lord's ransom."

This admonition was delivered in an emphatic whisper; and before Sir Gabriel had time to make any observation, Adonijah drew near, leaning on the arm of Shebak.

The Jew, on seeing the lady there before him, was not a little amazed; but soon perceiving the state of relationship in which she stood to the baron, he attributed her sudden presence there to the anxieties of conjugal solicitude.

"Ah, Sir Gabriel de Glowr," said Adonijah, "you have one very good wife—she was sore with her weariness; but she has come tripping with her loves and consolations to make light shine in upon your captivity."

"Have ye brought the money?" replied the baron.

"It's ill making light shine without oil,"

rejoined the lady, in figurative allusion to the same subject.

"I have had many adversities," replied Adonijah, "and my purse will not shake against the wind."

"But there's a wise-like man beside you," said the baron, "that I hae foregathered wi' afore now; I wouldna wonder an he had rose nobles, baith light ones, and o' the full weight. He'll no swither to serve a friend."

"Sir Gibrel," cried the lady, laying in her tongue, at the same time winking to him with the tail of her eye; "Sir Gibrel, ye'll hae to be reasonable; for if thir twa decent men mak good your ransom, and give us some sma' help to tak us hame, we should nae think o' being extortionate."

Adonijah looked at his brother, scarcely crediting that words so lowly could mean a proposal so extravagant, his utmost intention being only to give a few merks to procure the

formal evidence of having ransomed Rothelan from the Scots, as a proof that he was no traitor.

"'Deed, sir," rejoined the baron, "ye'll no fin' me a hard bargainer; for although the lad, as I hae heard, is a lord's son and heir, I'll let him off for very little. My own ransom, and a score or two of rose nobles, is a moderation that naebody can objek to."

"The man and the woman," said Adonijah aside to his brother, "are of the seed of Nabal. Deal thou with them; for their covetousness is as a rasp whose rasping my spirit cannot withstand."

Shebak upon this addressed himself with a smirk to Sir Gabriel, reminding him that he was not in the free latitudes of a camp, and told him, that if he did not agree to what Adonijah proposed, he might get nothing at all.

"No doot," rejoined the lady, "it's in your power, and in any man's power, no to

part wi' siller in hand. But ye ken the lad, Rothelan, that we hae in a sense brought up as our ain son, in a' manner of virtue, will be lanerly the sufferer; for I hae come to ransom Sir Gibrel mysel; and when he's ransomed, and we're baith away hame, where will be the proof and witness that the lad was na, as we ken he was, a traitor to his king and country?"

"Trouth," said Sir Gabriel, here taking up the thread of her discourse, "I canna say that I care meikle about your offer;—ye may mak it good or let it alane; but nae less than my own ransom, and a forbye to tak me hame, is what I honestly look for."

The manners of Sir Gabriel were something more earnest and peremptory than those of his lady; and the tone with which he said this, together with her cool and calm reference to the questionable circumstances of Rothelan, still more disconcerted Adonijah; and he took his brother a pace or two aside, and

spoke to him in a whisper,—the baron and his lady in the meantime exchanging congratulatory winks and smiles, in the anticipation of complete success.

"My brother," said Shebak, returning to the negotiation, "has no fears for the young man."

"Young man!" exclaimed the baron, "is that the way the like of you dares to speak o' a lord's son; na, as I'm creditably informed, an earl's son? Young man!—I canna say the rest o't."

"You say true," replied Shebak; "he is a lord's son; but a bastard."

This information startled both Sir Gabriel and his lady, and their exulting countenances fell. The circumstances in which the Lady Albertina had been seen at the inn; the interference of only the Jew; the mediation nor appearance of any person of authority on behalf of Rothelan; and the long time he had been allowed to remain unsought with them;

were all so confirmatory of this allegation, that they were perplexed and left at fault.

It happened, however, that although Adonijah acquiesced in the use which his brother Shebak so dexterously made of the imputed bastardy, he did not like to hear him repeat it, and touched him on the arm to desist. Shebak, however, saw that he had acquired advantage; and, with the hopes of a decided victory, continued to ring the changes on the word, adding in his zeal—"But though his father be willing to pay some small matter for his ransom, his mother is a creature from whom you can expect nothing; and nobody knows where she is, nor how she fares."

Adonijah, aware that the lady had seen her, was provoked at this indiscretion, and cried peevishly—"You speak foolishness;—peace, Shebak;—ah! you tread my toes."

The Lady of Falaside recovered from her shock; and hearing Shebak talk in that derogatory manner of the Lady Albertina, from

whom she had so lately parted, inferred that the alleged bastardy was but a device to procure an abatement of their terms.

"I see," said she, in her pleasantest irony, "I see that ye're well acquaint wi' the lady; I ken her too;—nae doot but she has a cast-away look, that maun surely be aloot;"—and, turning to Adonijah, she added, with a condescending smile—"I should thank you for making us acquainted."

"I will tell you truths," replied Adonijah, pushing Shebak behind him. "The mother of the stripling is a widow—she hath neither hearth nor home—she hangs upon my skirts—all that she has are my charities."

"Poor woman," said the lady, "an' the charities of a Jew be a' her dependence, she's indeed to be pitied."

"And she would not have needed them had there been any charities in a Christian," replied Adonijah.

"Ye blasphemous infidel!" exclaimed Sir

Gabriel de Glowr, "how dare ye speak of our holy religion in that way; I'll hae the tongue riven out o' your head wi' a pair o' red-het tongs, and gi'en to a dog for a collop."

Both Adonijah and Shebak looked apprehensively around. To be accused of slandering the Christian religion in a monastery, was in those days no small peril to a Jew. But the lady interposed, and returned to the business of the meeting.

"Surely ye dinna expek that we'll e'er believe a lady like yon's a beggar-woman; for my part, she was liker a countess. The Lady o' Seaton has nae pearlies like the beads about her neck. She has a dangle o' gold in ilka lug, Sir Gibrel, as big as a dyer's beetle. I wouldna think my part o' the care o' her son overly paid wi' her earrings. Really he was for many a day a heavy handful, the whilk should be compassionated over and aboon the ransom.

"In fine," says our author, after the proba-

tion of one another in this manner, the matter was settled to the content of the baron and his lady, and they would forthwith have retired to Scotland; but, in the course of the following day, notice was sent to Sir Gabriel from Rothelan, requesting him to remain in London; and assuring him, that it would be for his advantage to do so. This was in consequence of some steps taken by the Lord Mowbray to have the conduct of Sir Amias de Crosby examined before the privy-council.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DICE IN THE BOX.

Throw?—Shall I? No, I will not throw; and yet,
Fortune is here; and to a merry pin,
Dancing as if in glad expectancy,
That I shall choose to court her once again.—
Fickle jade!—This immelodious rattling
Sounds like the harlot's mirthless laugh.—The stake—
It is my all—I may not choose: I'll try.

THE DICER'S OATH.

THE vacillations in the conduct of Sir Amias de Crosby, form the most curious and interesting parts of this compilation. In all the ordinary affairs of life he was, without question, what is called an exceedingly good sort of man. The outlines of his character were indeed free of fault; every body spoke well of him who observed him from any distance; nor, till his brother's death, were his

seeming virtues, even among his familiar friends, ever suspected of being plated. We do not, therefore, at all wonder that Ralph Hanslap, who had known him, as it would appear, almost from childhood, should have remained so long and so constantly attached to him from curiosity alone.

There was but one key to the contrarieties of his character, and with it Ralph was well acquainted. Lady de Crosby had also some idea of what it was, but the whole of his behaviour in the earlier stages of the Lady Albertina's injuries, made her doubt if it was really so powerful as she had supposed. Her own goodness and purity of mind did not permit her to see that Sir Amias, saving in the irresistible visitings of compunction, which occasionally overwhelmed him with all that conscience could inflict, was naturally more alive and jealous of every thing affecting his character, than when he had less cause to be so careful.

The unforeseen and unexpected return of Rothelan had filled him with alarm. The thought that his daughter, as well as her mother, knew, or believed in his guiltiness, pierced him with the acutest pain; and the severe admonitions of the bishop showed him that, notwithstanding all his vigilance, he had been detected. But a summons to appear before the king, was, as if all he had so cherished, the very wealth itself, for which he had sacrificed his honour and peace of mind, were actually wrenched from his grasp.

Instead, however, of being, as on the other occasions, roused by the sharp shootings of inward stings to transports of passion amounting to the vehemence of frenzy, he appeared at first as if he had heard of nothing which particularly concerned him. He was alone when Ralph Hanslap brought him the Notice;—he read it, and returned it as a paper of no interest, and, without saying a word, moved

two or three steps towards the door of the chamber.

The squire remained fixed on the spot, following him with his calm and cautious eye.

Suddenly, as if recollecting some forgotten matter, Sir Amias paused, and threw his eyes towards Ralph Hanslap, holding out, at the same time, the slip of parchment which bore the notice. Hanslap took it; but neither made any remark. The knight then stood for a minute or two ruminating; but still there was nothing in the expression of his physiognomy that a cursory observer would have remarked. The squire rolled the summons round his finger; but his eye was set upon his patron.

Another short pause ensued, and Sir Amias again began to step forward, saying, as if it had related to some indifferent thing,—"Have you read that?"

"I have," replied Ralph Hanslap.

The knight looked at him for a moment steadily, and, turning round, evidently giving up his intention of going out, said—

"What is to be done?"

"That depends on yourself," replied the imperturbable familiar.

"On me!—I have no choice."

"You have."

"I can but defend myself against the process."

"You may do more."

"I know that, Hanslap."

"I thought you did."

Sir Amias walked two or three times across the floor, but still no external sign of inward perturbation appeared. His countenance was steady,—slightly thoughtful,—and, once or twice, as if from the course that his reflections were taking, he glanced his eye towards Ralph, and at last said—

"Have you any notion how this affair is to be proved?"

"According to law," replied the squire.

"Will they bring witnesses?"

"Without doubt."

"What will they prove?"

"I don't know," said Hanslap, unrolling the notice from his finger and looking at it, adding,

"It summons you before the king in council, touching certain manors and moveables of the late Edmund, Lord of Rothelan, at the instance of the king, on behalf of a ward of the crown.

"What ward of the crown?"

"Did you not read the summons?" said Ralph Hanslap, with an accent that betokened more emotion than he ordinarily, even on the most interesting occasions, appeared to feel; and casting one of his searching inquisitorial looks at the knight, said—

"The name is Dudley Neville."

"What then?" replied Sir Amias."

"It was the name I gave your nephew when he was delivered to the old traitor Pigot."

"I remember," was the knight's answer, accompanied with a bewildered wandering vacancy of countenance, as he added, "Dudley Neville—Dudley Neville! It would seem that the bastardy is not to be contested. She has not yet got evidence of her marriage."

"Have you any that she was not married?"

"I do not need it. I shall not be called to prove a negative."

"Then you mean to defend yourself?"

"It would be ruin, alike in fame and fortune, if I did not."

"And of body and soul if you do," said Ralph Hanslap, with that peculiar, collected, sober, sarcastic, Mephistophiles-like accent, which often made his patron look aghast, more with dismay than with the anger it might have been supposed calculated to provoke.

"This is business," said the knight gravely, "deal with it as such."

"I do so."

"Then what would you advise?"

"What do you think yourself, Sir Amias?"

"I must resist. It would be ruin every way to yield on less than complete proof."

"Did you not once intend," said Hanslap, in a slow but emphatic manner, "to acknowledge to the Lady Albertina, that you had been in error, and would restore all she claimed?"

"It was a rash thought. When I considered the consequences, I determined better —more as a man should."

"I do not think so," said Ralph Hanslap.

"Then you think I should do so still?"

"Yes, if you would avoid the sifting of this business," replied the squire, touching the slip of parchment gently with the forefinger of his right hand as he held it in his left.

"But what can they make out," rejoined Sir Amias, after a short pause, "by this

weak and foolish use of the name of Dudley Neville?"

"Is it weak and foolish?"

"You know it is not his name; and to make him a ward of the crown too!—I cannot fathom that."

"Nor can I," replied Ralph Hanslap.

There was another pause at this; during which Sir Amias walked several times round the room, with his brows gathered, his lips pursed, and his hands firmly pressing his sides.

"This affair troubles me, Hanslap."

"I think so," was the cool sardonic answer.

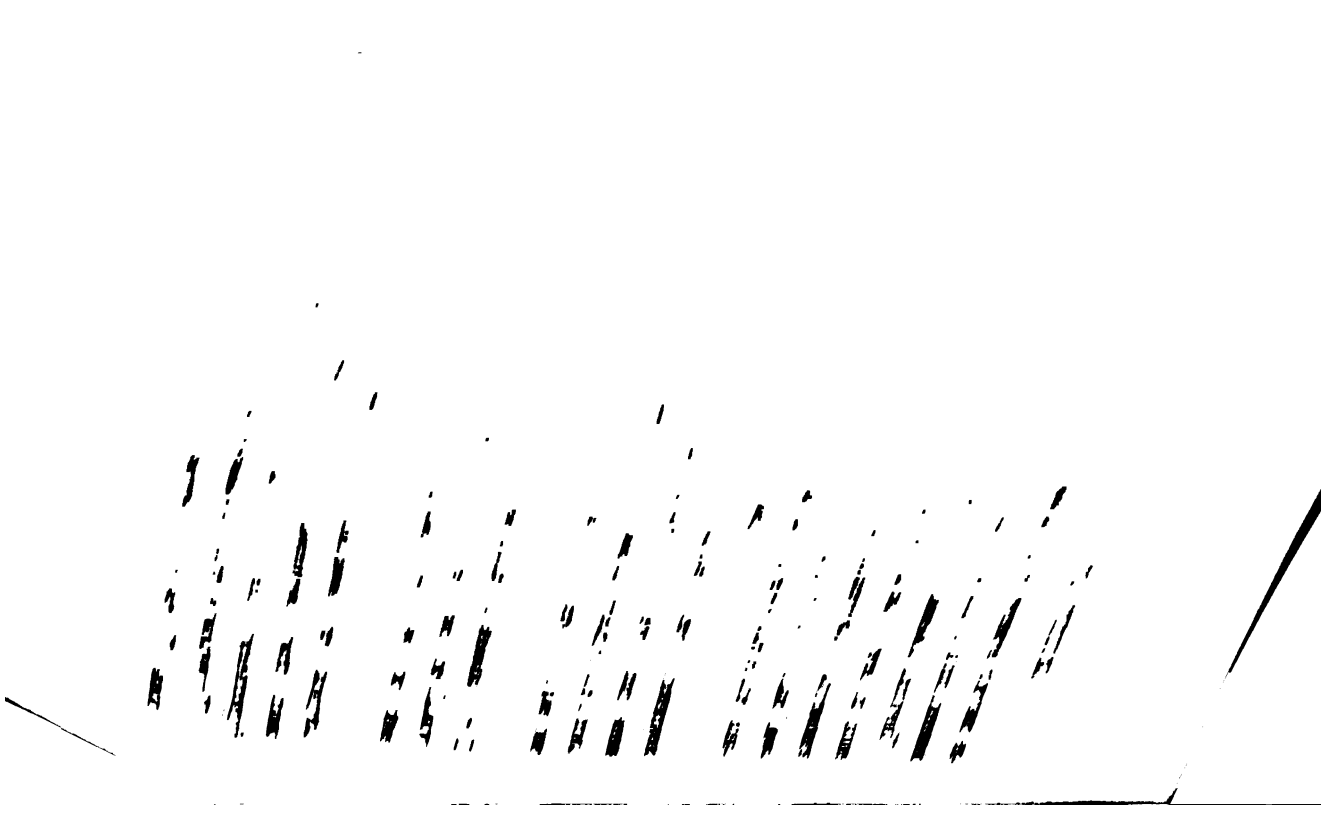
"You must learn for me, Hanslap, how this suit has been instituted."

"I can tell you already."

"How is that? All this time—seeing me so disturbed—and not to say as much before?"

"You never inquired."

Who could have thought that you would



Ralph Hanslap, with an affectation of simplicity that cut deeper and keener than even his most sarcastic interrogatories.

"I ask you what passed between them?" cried Sir Amias sharply. But at that moment they were interrupted by the entrance of Beatrice and her mother. Ralph Hanslap immediately retired, and the knight soon after followed to consult with him more particularly as to the course he should take in his appearance before the privy-council.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FADING FLOWER.

The meek light of the glow-worm's little lamp,
Hath not its being of an element
More delicate.

THE SWAIN AND MAIDEN.

THE Lady de Crosby, from the moment in which she thought that by the union of Beatrice and Rothelan the honour of her husband might be redeemed, or at least spared from the ignominy of exposure, scarcely ceased to meditate on the subject. But, as our author remarks in allusion to this, the currents of the world do not always run in the courses that men list to steer. The contrition of Sir Amias, after his humiliating interview with the Bishop of Winchester, had flattered her with the hope, that he would

have earnestly set himself forward in the gracious business of indemnity; but she had soon occasion to remark, that it worked, on the contrary, very warily. As the fervency of his penitence began to abate, he again wrapt himself as close as ever in that cloak of reserve and mystery which conscious guilt always puts on.

Her heart, in the meantime, found a new object in the melancholy of Beatrice. All other cares and griefs were suspended, when she contemplated the tender frame and gentle spirit of that pure and elegant being, pining with the thought of the venom that was yet corroding her father's heart, and which an obdurate fatality withheld him from the only antidote that could quench or mitigate its secret fires. She saw that the royal pageantries failed to produce the effect she had expected, and that the mind of the invalid was constantly turned in upon itself, regarding the celebrations of victory and conquest with far

less emotion than the sight of the falling leaf and the setting sun.

When at times (for the spirit of Beatrice was not always overshadowed by the blackness of melancholy), a beam of its wonted brightness shone out like the silvery light of the moon breaking through the fleecy margin of the clouds, the Lady de Crosby would return to the fond anticipation of her project. But still as often as she endeavoured to revive the subject with Sir Amias, he peevishly chided at her meddling; thinking, that if he in any way but favoured such a proceeding, it would be construed as a tacit acknowledgment of the rights of Rothelan, and, of course, by implication, be regarded as a confession of his own guilt,—a feeling difficult of explanation in connexion with the impressive circumstances which caused the peculiar dejection of his daughter. It was, however, germane to the morbid state of his reflections to contend with memory, and to equivocate, even to himself, the clear-

est and plainest evidence which reminded him of what he had done. Perhaps, however, in that respect, this conduct was not singular; for, according to our author, men often seek to hide from themselves the consequences of their faults and errors, like the silly ostriches, which, when pursued, close their eyes, and dip their heads into bushes, believing, that because they will neither look nor see themselves, that they are therefore made safe from the dangers they would fain escape.

The more that the knight thought his machinations and fraudulency discovered, the more scrupulous did he become in affording any thing for opinion to work with to his prejudice; and thus it was that he was averse to do aught that might lead any man to suspect he was moved thereto by apprehension. Nevertheless, no dexterity could avail; for, as it was related in the last chapter, Justice was on the road, and coming with a power against him, which, in the opin-

ion of Ralph Hatsleys, he was ill able to withstand.

Another cause, and far different of its kind, was also latently at variance with the amiable wishes of Lady de Crosby. After the interview with the Lady Albertina at the joustings, mentioned by the squire, Bothelan and Beatrice, it would appear, had been brought together. What passed at their meeting is not related; but previous to joining Sir Amias, as described in the foregoing chapter, some conversation took place between the mother and daughter, by which it would seem that there was an obstacle to the union neither foreseen nor contemplated even by the delicate and sensitive mind of the Lady de Crosby.

"What think you now, Beatrice, of our young kinsman?" said her mother.

Beatrice making no answer, the remark was repeated, Lady de Crosby adding some commendation on his appearance, and inquir-

ing if she thought as well of him as when she saw him last.

"It was but yesterday I saw him last," replied Beatrice pensively.

"Yesterday!" said her mother eagerly, "Where, how did you see him?"

"When I was almost trampled down by the horses of the tilters,—seeing my danger, he threw himself in between me and the pressure."

"I am glad of that,—you cannot be ungrateful for so signal a service; but how is it that you never told me of this? Whatever animosity his mother bears towards your father, there has been a lack of courtesy in not thanking your preserver."

"I am most grateful," said Beatrice; "and it was meet that his bravery should have been acknowledged; but I had no heart to speak of it."

"I would it were so," cried the lady with a smile.

"It is even so, madam," said I almost wish he had not saved me; and yet I am happy too that it was by him I have been so saved."

"In that sense of happiness, my dear child," said her mother tenderly, "there is, I trust, the foretaste of renewed hope. What fears,—what anxious fears,—what disturbed shame,—what impending and inexpressible misery it would remove from us all."

"What would remove all that? If it could be done, it were merciful in Heaven to do it! For, oh! upon my heart lies a clay-cold heaviness that will soon weigh me down into the grave."

Her mother was touched by the plaintive sadness with which this was expressed, and replied—

"I do not think it is a very grievous task. A little gentle endeavour on your own part, sweet Beatrice, would do it all."

"On my part! What can I do?"

"Surely," replied her mother, "the only impediment is your affinity; but a dispensation may easily be procured from Rome."

"Of what do you speak?"

"Of a union between you and your cousin."

Beatrice uttered a low soft murmur, and turned aside her head, as she said—

"No, no; that can never, never be."

"How?" cried her mother, surprised by the despondency of the declaration. "Surely, were he to offer, there is no cause to make you refuse?"

Beatrice only answered with a sigh, "Were he to offer!"

"That could not fail to come to pass," replied her mother, "were he to receive any encouragement."

"I doubt not," said Beatrice, "it would be most acceptable to my father."

"Then, can you hesitate?"

"Me!"

The look with which this was said penetrated to the bottom of her mother's heart. She saw how much, in the scheme on which she was thus so eagerly bent, she had forgotten the noble elevation to which she had herself so studiously exalted the sentiments of a mind, framed of the finest element, and touched with a spirit of such exquisite purity, that she often used to say of Beatrice in childhood,—"Nature, in forming this delightful thing, hath fallen into some beautiful error in placing it on the earth. Truly it is as one of those fair creatures who inhabit a twilight region between life and light."

Beatrice, observing the effect which she had produced on her mother, added calmly—

"Were it required of me to lay down my life to help my father to redeem his fault, I should be found ready. There would be virtue, charity, and filial duty in such martyrdom; but to do aught by which he may pre-

serve the fruit of his offence, were to leave him in the peril of his guilt."

The Lady de Crosby made no reply, but took the hand of her daughter, and pressed it to her bosom.

CHAPTER VII.

A PLAIN TALE.

All that you say is true—
I do confess it all—and yet, I pray you,
Say of it all wherein I am to blame:—
Gods, can a man do nought for charity,
But envious neighbours may suspect he does
The good for ill?—Out on the world's malice!

ANONYMOUS.

In the meantime the citation of Sir Annas de Crosby to the privy council, and the story of Rothelan, began, as the Chronicler says, to be in every man's mouth; and yet, by some unaccountable fatality, the knight himself acted in all things as if neither interest, curiosity, nor suspicion, had been excited against him. He went daily with his lady and daughter to see the jousts and tiltings of the knights

knights; and he often threw himself in the way of the Lady Albertina, and Adonijah, who was constantly with her, and whose singular friendship was the talk and wonder of the whole court, but she always turned away from him, and with an averting hand and an averted head, commanded him to desist from his intrusions.

Sometimes Rothelan was observed to approach the Lady de Crosby and Beatrice as they walked among the company in the Park; but if Sir Amias was with them when this happened, he took them away with so marked a coldness of demeanour towards his nephew that it frequently awakened his resentment.

The Lady Albertina was not less anxious than the knight to prevent the acquaintance of Rothelan and Beatrice from ripening into intimacy. She suspected the views with which the Lady de Crosby evidently encouraged the advances of her son; and she considered that the union of the cousins, inasmuch as to

would supersede, perhaps, the necessity of any open vindication of her wrongs, might fix for ever the stain with which the Annas had blotted the purity of her character.

Her son restored to her, and flourishing in the immediate radiance of the royal countenance, left her no other subject of anxiety, but only the desire of redress; and nothing less than a complete and perfect acknowledgment of all her rights no human consideration was capable of moving her to accept. In this feeling the whole energies of her spirit centered;—and the indignation which she felt in the thought, of not being regarded as the widow of her lord, derived fervour from the gratitude which she owed to the Jew, and constant excitement from the long and inexplicable negligence of her Italian friends.

The dawn, however, as it seemed, of a new day had opened in her prospects. From the time that the Lord Mowbray and the Bishop of Winchester had communicated to the king

the history of Rotherham, the suspected fraud of Sir Amias, and the noble constancy with which she had repulsed every overture of reconciliation on any terms derogatory to her dignity as the wife of Lord Edmund, it had been determined to procure, by the direct interposition of his majesty's resident at the court of Rome, such evidence from Florence as should either decide the question of her marriage, or confirm the allegations of Sir Amias. In consequence of this, a number of persons who had been witnesses of the ceremony were found, and the necessary steps taken to bring them to England;—who or what they were, —their rank, relationship, nor aught concerning them, is not mentioned; but only, that a vessel, which had been at Palestine with certain English pilgrims, having touched at Civita Vecchia on her return, the English minister at Rome induced those ill-fated poor Florentines to go to that port, and embark in her for London.

The despatches containing the account of the embarkation of these witnesses had led to the expectation of their speedy arrival; and it was owing in some degree to this circumstance, that Sir Amias was so unexpectedly served with the summons to come before the king in council. That proceeding had been dictated out of respect to his general character; for he had several friends, members of the council, who could not credit any report injurious to his probity, and who were desirous that some preliminary investigation might take place, to afford him an opportunity of removing the impression produced by the singular narratives of the Bishop of Winchester and the Lord Mowbray.

"In all this," says the Chronicler, "we may discern how the inscrutable engineries of Providence moveth forward into effect. Here, in the very sanctuary of a great king's council, were persons of renown and venerable wisdom, drawn by the partialities of private fa-

tour, not indeed to lead themselves to an unjust purpose, but to desire in their hearts, that one suspected of having done a grievous wrong, might have a mean to escape from the penalty of his unworthiness. For it was thought, that assuredly if Sir Amias de Crosby had been guilty of those things alleged against him, he would, in the dread of that inquest, be stirred to make restitution, and so save himself from shame."

But when he appeared before the council, King Edward then present in person, it would seem that, in this respect, his friends were disappointed. For, with a great show of candour, such as won for him the most favourable audience, he freely admitted, that the young man, known by the name of Dudley Neville, was, he believed, the same, who, when a child, had been regarded as his brother's son; "willingly," said he, "would I acknowledge him also as his heir, were there any other assurance of his legitimacy than the de-

charations of his mother, who, notwithstanding her threats, has never yet been able to produce proof or voucher of her marriage."

When questioned, as to the manner in which Rothelan, when a child, was stolen from his mother, and consigned to the care of Pierce Pigot, he acknowledged, that certainly it was an incident which admitted of the most suspicious construction against him. "But," said he, "I will be open to your majesty. I believe that an old and faithful friend, I may say, rather than servant of mine, one Ralph Hanslap, seeing in what manner the unfortunate lady was wrecking the peace of my family by her pretensions, did devise that expedient out of his attachment to me, thinking, in what way is not easy to discover, that he would thereby serve me. Beshrew him for the trick, for now it is remembered to my prejudice."

All present, save the Bishop of Winchester and the Lord Mowbray, who was also at the

council table, applauded the candour of Sir Amias; and the king said, "I doubt not, Mowbray, the adventure of your page at York may be as easily explained."

"No," replied Sir Amias, "in that there is a mystery which I cannot expound. But if your majesty will consider the strange familiarity between his mother and the Jew; how they knew of his being with the Scots, and were prepared for his arrival in London with the other prisoners; the well-known inexorable avarice of Adonijah; and the hopes that may have been addressed to it to obtain the helps of his purse, it must be manifest that there is more in this story to cause wonder than pertains to my part of it. Of that adventure at York I know nothing,—I can explain nothing; I can only declare my entire innocence of all concerning it; and if it stands in the minds of those that hear me to the detriment of my integrity, I can but lament the misfortune. This much, however, I will

confess, that I have of late begun to suspect, that perhaps the same person of whom I have already spoken—I mean Ralph Hanslap—was art or part in that affair. But it is only since the return of my nephew from Scotland that I heard of it at all. I therefore conjure your majesty to judge of me in this with charity; for I confess that it has indeed an evil bearing upon me."

"Is not Ralph Hanslap still in your service?" said the Bishop of Winchester.

"I confess it," replied Sir Amias, "and with some measure of shame; but he was in a manner bred with me, and even the ill he may have done was, I verily believe, intended for my good; how then could I cast him off?"

The counsellors looked at one another; and the king said—

"Truly, my lords, I see not well how this can go farther. There is no fault that I can discern in this excellent gentleman; we must

therefore suspend the consideration of the whole matter till more information is obtained."

The king then rose, and the council was adjourned.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ROUND TABLE.

King Arthur's knights, they were nine times nine,
With squire and page beside;
And they merrily drank of the merry-make wine,
From the noon to the even-tide.

AN EXCELLENT NEW SONG.

THE story of Rothelan reminded the king of all that had happened on his northern expedition, and particularly of what took place between himself and his noble kinswoman, the Countess of Salisbury, at Werk castle. He recalled the remembrance of the vow he had made there, and resolved, amidst those high banquetings and bright festivals, which had assembled all the fair and famous of the realm at Windsor, to institute an order of knighthood, which,

for honour and splendour, should have no parallel in the world. "Accordingly," says the Chronicler, passing to the description of the ceremonies attending the institution of the order of the Garter, whose symbol was taken from the incident which befell the Lady Salisbury on that remarkable occasion, when, by her virtue, she inspired the king with the zeal of true heroism,—"Sir Amias de Crosby having retired from the council, his majesty went into a stately chamber, which he had caused to be raised with all manner of artful devices and ornaments of excelling splendour, whereof the gold was the least precious thing about them. There, taking a seat at a round table, where already were assembled a noble chapter of his companions in arms, and many personages of great renown; the which round table was made in similitude to that of old, when King Arthur feasted, in like manner, the warlike worthies of his time; and being so seated, he spoke to them in the effect ensuing:

"This, our fair realm of England, stands in the midst of the sea as the throne of a great arbiter. Towards her surrounding nations stretch forth their headlands, like the extended arms of imploring suitors, acknowledging her supremacy, and beseeching her to determine their quarrels. Hence it has happened in our own time, as all of you, Companions, well know, that many kings and states of great eminence have turned to us as to a high tribunal, seeking redress for wrongs suffered from their neighbours, and claiming our help for injuries which of their own means they could not avenge. The balance of justice between nation and nation being thus confessedly in the hands of our dear England, it is fit that she should have worthy officers throughout Christendom to execute her decrees, and to see the Right established according to her impartial awards. For this purpose, we have formed certain emblems of honour to be achievable by whom-

soever professes the Christian faith, and who, blest with noble blood, fights undauntedly in a worthy cause. The order of St George, which we thus intend to found, shall accordingly become a prize of honour, not only to those who may hereafter maintain the cause of England, but a guerdon to them that best uphold the general weal of Christendom."

He then commanded the ornaments of the order to be laid on the table, and expounded the secret meaning and hieroglyphical intelligence of the emblems, dwelling with much emphasis on the pregnancy of virtue that was in the Garter, which he had devised as the remembrancer of the hests of the order.

Whereupon a certain divine,—whose countenance was rubiconed with the stress of patient study, though the like toil commonly works to pale effect on most men, (his chaplain was of that complexion) on hearing the king speak in that eloquent manner of the sacred influences of such types and

tokens,—when his majesty paused, took up the same strain, adding, from the great storehouse of his learning,—

"But, my lords, this emblem of the Garter is no new device: it lacks not the consecration which time bestows on the meanest things; for though it may seem to some here but new and in the beginning, it is yet hallowed by antiquity, and is in this magnificent restoration but as a virtuous body called from ancient dust to a glorious resurrection. Yes; the fillet of blue hath ever been held sacred by those who would prosper on the seas. The poets of old relate, that when the Argonautic vessel sailed for the Hellespont, the Samothracian priests, who had from long-forgotten ages served the Cabiri, or the triple undivulged gods, whose names were Axiorus, Axiocersa, and Axiocersus, were wont to invest kings and other famous men with an azure-coloured band. To propitiate the waves and tempests, Achilles, Agamemnon, and Ulysses, were by those priests so

invested; and it deserves to be well remembered by you, that because Ulysses, heedless of that initiation, afterwards assumed a white band,—strange that it should have been the colour of France,—he was punished with many terrible adventures on the seas,—for the gods ever abhor innovators. Nor, as Homer bears witness, was it until Leucothia and Palemon had reinvested the much-enduring hero a second time with the blue fillet that the awful Cabiri were appeased. Many things of the virtue of this type might I here rehearse, concerning the fortunes of those who, in the olden æras, were initiated by the Samothracian priests, but it were to darken the dignity of so bright a theme to summon any countenance from fable; and therefore, leaving the poesy of antique logomachies, I shall pass to the unquestionable history of our renowned patron, the blessed martyr, St George, of whose martyrdom, as it is written in a Saxon book, (which, having

here at hand,) I shall read to your contentment."

This rubiconed-visaged clerk then drew from under his cloak an old book of vellum, written learnedly in the Saxon tongue, which he thus read into English:—"And St George prayed to the Lord, and said, Jesu Christ, receive my soul! And I beseech thee, that whosoever shall commemorate me on earth, all fraud, peril, hunger, and sickness, be far from his house; and that whosoever shall, in any peril on the sea, or elsewhere, make use of my name, thou wilt be merciful unto him." "Yet," resumed that most learned divine, "is not this all;—here is another book, wherein the same thing of that holy martyr being rehearsed, in a more particular manner, proves the veracity of the legend:

"His hands he held up on high,
Adown he set his knee,
Lord, he said, O Jesu Christ,
This only thing might I see;

Grant unto me, if it is thy will,
That who in faire manere
Holds well my day in Aperil,
For my love on earth here,
That there never fall sickness in his house,
Nor harm in all the year.
And who there be in peril of sea
Through me shall make his boon,
Or be in other jeopardies,
Heal him thereof full soon.
Then he heard a voice from Heaven,
That said to him, I wis,
'Come forth to me, my blessed child,'
And his head off smitten is."

"Thus may you discern what assurance of safety there is in abiding in saintly allegiance with St George, as King Richard, the famous Cœur de Lion, found to his great profit, when lying before the town of Acre, which was then stoutly defended by the infidel. Being much wearied with the tediousness of this siege, he was roused by an immediate inspiration of St George, direct-

ing him to bid certain of his companions bind round their left legs a thong or garter, to remind them of the glory that would accrue to them in vanquishing their enemies. Which fact was done in imitation of the warlike Romans, among whom were various crowns invented for the honour of those who stood well in the service of their country. Some of the names of the knights, so adorned on that occasion by King Richard, I might here state; but enough is told to convince you all, that assuredly St George, who did at that time inspire the renowned Cœur de Lion, was in spirit with his worthy and warlike successor, our present king, when he devised this more illustrious badge of chivalry and achievement."

That great clerk having thus concluded his learned commentary, King Edward said to the other knights around the table—

"It is not meet that unlettered soldiers such as we are should scan this curious

recital of our learned registrar; and therefore, accepting it with unquestioning faith, we have but to say, that doubtless antiquity doth make a part of nobility, in so much as it is an inherited accordancy of inclination towards high deeds. Therefore, in choosing our companions in this new order, we take not altogether by the merits of the men, but seek some assurance from their pedigrees, that what was deemed great in their actions comes not of passion, but is of the habitude of their blood. For, in the changes and accidents of the world, those who, in honour themselves, boast of a long illustrious descent, have assuredly inherited the sustaining virtue which carried their fathers on the top of the waves, while so many races, of no less promise in their progenitors, sank in the stream."

In this manner, according to our authority, did King Edward determine, as he had vowed, to found the noble order of the Garter; and

that same night there was a masking and banquet in the castle, such as no man had ever before seen in England. But, for a cause now to be set forth, Rothelan was not present, as in duty he was called to have been, in his capacity of squire to the Lord Mowbray.

CHAPTER IX.

NEW CARES.

New cares, new fears, new hopes he knows,
And many a feeling without name.

PARK.

AMONG the great congregation of gorgeous dames and barons bold then assembled at Windsor, was the Lady Blanche, the daughter and heiress of the Earl of Lincoln.

"It were a vain limning," says the Chronicler in speaking of the latter, "to use the coarse substance of words prosaical in descanting on such beauty; for in excellence it was so rare and surpassing, that it could only be depictured by the similitudes of poesy. It was in sooth a visible music, and her voice an auricular glory more exquisite in the hearing than is the sparkling of the morning to

the sight. Yet was she not in her resplendence an orb of so ethereal a beam as the delicate Beatrice, in whose fair and mild blue eyes shone a meek holiness which fell upon the heart like moonlight on the mountains—cold and beautiful—in the harmony of silence and rest."

It happened, that though Rothelan was moved with a tender solicitude for his gentle and dejected cousin, the brighter charms of the Lady Blanche darted a more stirring warmth into the love-pulses of his youthful bosom. "But the delicious malice of the urchin Cupid," says our quaint original, "albeit not unsparingly administered, in nowise could be said to work to him any dolour, in the manner reported by the fabulous poets and harpers, who, in the trickt eloquence of their artful roundelays, wherewith they alleviate simplicity, show forth the sweet passion of love as a flatulent anguish, causing a suspiratious flowing of briny tears." With him,

indeed, it was a new and joyous sense of some property in beauty more delightful than admiration can discern. Instead of prompting him to haunt the solitary glades of the forest, and the green dells and lonely places in the hollows of the park, there to pine himself into a poetical temperament, it made him fain to bask in the radiance of her eyes, to the end that he might win her favour by what our author calls "the manhood of his curvetting."

It would appear, however, that he did not trust entirely to the exhibition of his personal accomplishments; but, according to the custom of the age, sought, by a more pathetic flattery, to awaken an interest of a tenderer kind than the witchery of noble horsemanship alone can inspire. Like other young gallants of the court, who, beneath the windows of their ladies' bowers, were wont to sweeten the midnight air with melodious serenades, and to blithen the morning with

cheerful reveillies, he resolved to breathe his fond passion in a musical ditty. With that view, having obtained, by devout solicitation of the heavenly muse, the following sonnet, he repaired, in the dewy interim between the singing time of the nightingale and the lark, to the middle ward of the castle, and sung it under the windows of the Lady Blanche.

SONNET.

Long ere the joyous harbinger of day
Had from the eastern hill announced the dawn,
My love I hail'd, as like the morn she lay,
The fringed curtains of her eyes undrawn;
And yet she comes not, though a flood of light
Has quench'd the sparkling of Aurora's star,
And all the glittering dews, in misty flight,
Have viewless spread themselves in air afar—
And yet she comes not, though the voice of love,
In vocal sweetness, rises from the bowers,
And beauty, emulous her charms to prove,
Invites abroad with fragrancy of flowers.
Why stays my fair? the morning freshness flies—
Awake! O glory of my sight, arise!

Whatever may be said of the ardour and eloquence of his solicitation as a lover, it must be admitted, that his genius as a poet is not entitled to any particular commendation; at least if this reveillie pleased the Lady Blanche, as she lay in the dreamy delight of her morning slumber, it did not give unmingled satisfaction to the taste of the earl her father. Noblemen, however, are not fair critics of poetry addressed to their daughters by youths of dubious birth; and the Earl of Lincoln was in that respect particularly fastidious. On hearing the song, and looking out to see who was the singer, he could scarcely credit his eyes when he beheld Rothelan. But we shall not describe the indignation with which he ordered him to retire, nor enter into any account of the measures he took in the course of the day to prevent the repetition of such bold presumption; especially as there is reason to doubt the authenticity of some parts of the statement, when compared with the

veracious report of seven dowagers of unblemished reputation, who sifted the whole affair thoroughly to the bottom. This much is certain, that the Earl of Lincoln, being of a choleric and harsh temper, was so wroth on the occasion, that he would scarcely be satisfied with less on the part of his kinsman, the Lord Mowbray, than the immediate and condign dismissal of our young hero from his patronage. That noble baron did not, however, altogether yield to a request so vehement; but he so far concurred in condemning the pretensions of his squire, that he forbade his attendance at the banquet in the evening; by which circumstance, Rothelan being left free to choose his company, about sunset strolled alone into the Park, where he met the Lady de Crosby, with Beatrice leaning on her arm, partaking the cool freshness of the brow of the hill.

As they were standing together, talking of light and indifferent matters, Sir Amias, after

quitting the council, was discovered passing along below with the Earl of Lincoln, who was evidently, by his gestures, and by stopping from time to time as if to be more emphatic, pressing upon him some urgent enterprise.

After some time, the earl, having apparently finished all he had to say, turned to go back to the castle; and Rothelan remarked that there was something in their separation which indicated the arrangement of a compact between them. Having cordially shaken hands, each walked a few paces his own way; then, as if suddenly reminded of something, the earl hastily turned round, and calling the knight to him by name, spoke a sentence or two in his ear, and raising his hand, significantly shook his forefinger, the tacit signal of an admonition to be circumspect.

The adventure of the morning, the threats with which the earl had then menaced him, and the apprehensions he entertained of the machinations of Sir Amias, all combined to

make Rothelan suspect that he was the subject of their conversation; nor was he left long in doubt. The knight, on coming towards the spot where he was standing with the ladies, assumed a more haughty air than he had ever done before, often as he had on other occasions, by similar coldness and reserve, offended the feelings of his nephew.

"I was willing," said Sir Amias, addressing Rothelan, while he drew the arm of Beatrice gently through his own, "I was willing to have given you the utmost favour of my countenance, and to have done all in my power to counteract the blemish in your birth."

"There is no blemish in my birth," cried Rothelan, indignantly stirred into anger by the cool arrogance of his uncle. "My mother has but only not produced evidence, which you ought never to have required."

Sir Amias, elated by the success of his own address and dexterity before the privy-coun-

cil, and strong in the confidence that neither his conduct nor character would again be called in question, replied in a calm sarcastic manner, as he led his lady and daughter away—

"It may help your ambition, young man, to keep that slander alive; but my Lord of Lincoln is not to be deceived by any tale, however plausibly told. It is, I own, a brave bounce to aspire to the daughter of so proud an earl—a ward of the crown truly—Dudley Neville too! Is the woman you call mother sure that you are her son?"

Scarcely had he uttered these words when he felt that he had overleaped the propriety of his character. Hitherto he had been distinguished in a courteous age for the condescension of his manners; but the intoxication of the moment acted upon him with the energy of a fatal impulse, and obliged him to give vent to expressions which betrayed his secret nature, as it were, in despite of resolution and of habit.

His lady hurried onward, and Beatrice hung upon his arm almost without the power of motion. Rothelan grew pale for a moment; his eyes flashed, and his lips quivered. Sir Amias himself became agitated, and his complexion changed.

"When my noble mother's right is established," cried Rothelan hoarsely, but endeavouring to master his rage, "there will be no lack of evidence to make mine also clear. Her's will not now be long in doubt; there are witnesses on the sea, who will soon be here to confute you."

Sir Amias halted as if he had been thunderstruck, and, with a bewildered and ghastly look, exclaimed,—"Witnesses on the sea!"

"Ay," replied Rothelan, "have you not heard it?"

Sir Amias made no answer; but he was observed to shudder for a moment from head to foot. Beatrice dropped his arm and went round to her mother, who caught her to

her bosom as she was almost sinking to the earth.

"I respect these unfortunate ladies," said Rothelan softly; and turning away from them hastily, retired to a distance, while they walked heavily and silently towards the town—Sir Amias from time to time looking behind with the vacancy of apprehension and alarm.

CHAPTER X.

SPELL-BOUND.

I am enchanted to abide his coming,
Be it for weal or woe.

ANONYMOUS.

SIR AMIAS DE CROSBY, immediately on reaching his lodging, is described as having abruptly parted from the ladies, and retired to his own apartment, where he found Ralph Hanslap sitting in a sullen and moody humour.

"It is well over," said the squire, rising as the knight entered, "and now I will quit England."

"Then you have heard that she has at last procured witnesses?" replied Sir Amias.

"I have."

"What then?" said the knight, after a short pause.

"What then!" echoed Ralph Hanslap, with a more acute accent than he usually employed, even when much surprised; and he added, in his habitual cool, sedate manner, looking inquisitively as he spoke—

"It will be of no use to contend any longer against so many crosses."

"The proof of her marriage does not make him her son," rejoined the knight.

"Say you so?" cried Ralph Hanslap, as if he felt some lively inward satisfaction.

"He may be an impostor procured by the Jew, as an instrument to extort money," replied Sir Amias.

Ralph Hanslap fixed his firm eye steadily on the knight's countenance for nearly the space of a minute, and then said emphatically, but in a low and almost an inaudible voice—

"This is more than I expected."

Sir Amias trembled with emotion, and took

three or four hasty strides across the floor, and then exclaimed in tones of the bitterest grief—

"I am infatuated; I do and I say things I would hide from myself. Some incontrollable and mysterious power hath surely acquired the masterdom of my mind, and rules its volitions to a dreadful tendency."

"Why then, Sir Amias, do you not throw it off?" said his familiar, touched with something like contrition moving to sympathy at seeing the misery of one to whom he had been so long attached; "even I have had no quiet, but only a burning anxiety, since we engaged in this business.

"A foretaste of hell, Hanslap!" exclaimed Sir Amias wildly.

"But it may be quenched."

"How! at the expense of all honour, all consideration? No, no, Hanslap, let her prove the marriage,—I will allow of that; I want but reasonable evidence."

"I wonder," said Ralph Hanslap slowly, "how it is that you endure this fire in your heart, when you may be so easily rid o't?"

"Had the story not come to the world's ear, I would have made voluntary restitution long ago; but I cannot now,—I am bound in fetters stronger than adamant to abide the issue of her evidence."

"Is it so rare a thing in the world," said Ralph Hanslap, calmly, as the knight was pacing the room, "is it so rare a thing in the world, for those who hold the possessions of others to require proof of right before resignation, that you should be so disturbed by this unexpected rumour of witnesses coming from Florence? You say you are willing to resign on proof being produced of the marriage."—

"But I am entangled beyond all escape," cried Sir Amias, with a degree of vehemence that left Hanslap in some doubt of the soundness of his mind. "Yes, I am dragged on

from sin to sin,—what think you, Hanslap?" and he rushed towards him, and grasped him distractedly by the hand; "I have told the Earl of Lincoln, that I doubt if Dudley Neville be indeed the son of the Lady Albertina."

"He may be an impostor, procured by the Jew as an instrument to extort money," said Ralph Hanslap heavily, uttering each word of the sentence with a pause between.—"What will come next?"

"Blood, blood, Hanslap! blood, blood! The devil has fastened a chain upon me, and I feel him tugging me down."

"But you may escape—why need you raise this new question? If the lady prove her marriage, let her call whom she will her brat; what's that to you?"

"Had I not told the Earl of Lincoln;—when I did tell him, it came from me as it were in despite of myself."

"Well, Sir Amias, but let it rest there; stir no more in it; wait the coming of the

witnesses; and when they have told their tale, give all up, and take back your peace of mind again."

"Oh! that never can be," replied the miserable and indecisive man; "Memory will never more let me know peace again. I cannot forget what I have done."

"What have you done?" said Ralph Hanslap.

Sir Amias folded his hands together, and stood for some time in the attitude of prayer. It was the crisis of his perturbation.

The fit passed; he threw his hands asunder, and said, with his ordinary passionless accent—

"This is foolish, Hanslap. If the woman and her son are what she says they are, they may have their rights for me,—but not without evidence."

"But, if her marriage be proved, do you intend to deny that the Lord Mowbray's squire is her son?"

"I will deny nothing. I shall only require him to show, that he is indeed the same who was stolen from Crosby-house. I am pledged to the Earl of Lincoln for as much."

"What has the earl to do with it?"

"He would marry his daughter to the Lord Suffolk."

"I am still at fault."

"The impostor makes love to her."

"Impostor!" echoed Ralph Hanslap; and he added, "he has never received a pardon for being taken with the Scots."

Sir Amias started, relapsing into the agitation from which he had but so recently recovered, as he said, in a deep and troubled tone—

"I have thought of that."

"But did you speak of it to the earl?"

Sir Amias looked around involuntarily, as if to see that there was no witness present.

Ralph Hanslap seemed as if he enjoyed his apprehension, and said, in that dry and sarcastic manner, which he sometimes employed with such withering effect—

"A traitor's death can never be called murder."

"Can you not show me any way by which I may escape from this frightful labyrinth?" exclaimed Sir Amias, shaken through all his spirit by the hideous suggestion conveyed in the sarcasm. But Hanslap, without heeding his emotion, resumed, in a cold calculating manner—

"It would save a world of trouble."

"What would?" cried Sir Amias eagerly.

"What you meant, when you told the Earl of Lincoln that your nephew had not received any regular pardon."

"I did not say he was my nephew. How know I that he is my nephew?"

"Were he your son he could not give you more anxiety," replied the squire with a

smile, and he continued, "but leave him in the hands of the Earl of Lincoln."

"He is a nobleman, whose honour," replied Sir Amias, "malice hath never yet stained."

"Never yet," said Ralph Hanslap emphatically.

"And it is his opinion, and advice too," resumed the knight, "that I ought not to consider Dudley Neville, under all the singular circumstances of my situation, as having any claim upon me."

"Because," replied the squire, "he wishes his daughter rather to prefer the Lord Suffolk. He will be your friend, Sir Amias, if you help him in that. But have you both agreed to procure the prosecution of the young man for the alleged treason? Now I know what you meant by blood."

"Hanslap, you grow unmannerly,—coarse terms beget foul thoughts," said Sir Amias somewhat proudly.

"And foul thoughts require coarse terms," replied the firm and imperturbable familiar. "No, Sir Amias, there is no need to juggle in this business with me, who am in it, as it were, a part of yourself—like your conscience. But I go no farther."

"What do you mean?"

"Blood!"

"If he is no traitor he will not suffer."

"If he be condemned, the king will probably pardon him; but then his estates will be forfeit."

"Estates!—what estates?"

"All that is of right his,—all that you possess of his."

"I do not understand you," said Sir Amias in amazement.

"Yes," replied Ralph Hanslap, "if he is condemned as a traitor, the crown-officers will not fail, be ye assured, to find out what of right belongs to him."

"But they cannot prove that any thing

of mine belongs to him. They cannot prove that he is even the son of the Italian woman."

"True," interrupted Ralph Hanslap; "he may be an impostor procured by the Jew."

"Why do you harp on that?"

"I wish that I could see the end of all this," replied the squire, "and were myself well out of it."

"That you may be when you choose," said Sir Amias coldly.

"But I cannot choose. No, Sir Amias, our destinies make the warp and woof of one web, and cannot be separated. I will wait to see what comes to pass; but it grows dark apace, and for the present I must bid you good night."

CHAPTER XI.

BACK-STAIRS.

——— I am no knave, but a true worthy;
And what I say, bidding my lord to do;
His for any worth should willingly accord.
What is't to him, whether my yea or nay
Affect the fortunes of the stranger knight?—
For what I am, and for the jeopardies
That seem so ravenous to engulph my all,
I make this intercession.

PRITCHARD'S COURTIER.

IN the meantime the Earl of Lincoln, after parting from Sir Amias de Crosby in Windsor Park, proceeded to the castle, where, in the course of the evening, during some interval of the banqueting, he took an opportunity of speaking with his majesty concerning the much-talked-of adventures of Rothelan. He had been present at the council when the

knight, in obedience to the summons, appeared there; and, referring to what then passed, he began to remark on the improbability of so prosperous a gentleman as Sir Amias de Crosby being criminally engaged in any machination to deprive his brother's widow of her rights and rank, and his nephew of his honours and inheritance.

"There is one thing," said the earl, "in which Sir Amias carries his charity too far; he gives credence too easily to all that the woman and the Jew say about the young man being her son."

"Is that doubted?" replied the king.

"It is a point on which doubt may well be entertained. Many years——"

"But," interrupted his majesty, "Mowbray has himself told me, that Dudley Neville is assuredly the very page who was lost at York."

"That is not doubted," said the earl; "but the page has not yet been proved to be

the same child who was stolen during the fire at Crosby-house."

"Indeed!—Sir Amias, however, admitted that he is the same; and, if I rightly understood the Bishop of Winchester, the lady says he is the same, and the Jew says he is the same."

The earl, without making any remark in answer to the king's observation, reverted to what he was about to say when interrupted by his majesty:—

"Many years elapsed,—some ten or a dozen at least," he resumed, "after the child was stolen from Crosby-house, before it was again brought forward. The doubt is in that interval. Though the lady's marriage were proved, it will yet be necessary to demonstrate the identity of the child, the page, and this adventurer, Neville."

"Adventurer!" replied the king, in an accent of surprise; "Lincoln, you seem to have taken some dislike to him."

"I but call him, please your majesty, what I find him."

"You, my lord!—how do his adventures affect you?"

"He merits from me no better epithet. Notwithstanding the dubiety in which he stands, he has yet presumed to address himself to my daughter."

"I commend his taste," replied the king with a smile; and then his majesty added gravely,—"I see how it is; you would put an end to his suit;—but may not that be interdicted without you, my lord, becoming a party to the question of his legitimacy?"

"Though of that there were no question," said the earl, "I am not to forget that he hath not yet been pardoned of his treason."

"Has that not been yet done?—I shall see to it myself. The offence on his part was venal, and ought not to be remembered. Mowbray should have reminded me of this," said the king, a little discomposed, as if he

felt that he had himself allowed of some omission.

"In the uncertain circumstances of the case, and the fair and candid dealing of Sir Amias de Crosby," replied the earl, "perhaps Lord Mowbray has judged discreetly in not pressing the pardon; for, till the issue of the affair is determined——"

"No, no," said the king, interrupting him sharply,—"the treason and the affair of Sir Amias are two things of no affinity to each other;—that he was carried when a page—a mere stripling—into Scotland,—there brought up among the savage retainers of a petty chief, and joined them in their Border feuds and freebooting, with scarcely the bare remembrance of England,—are circumstances that will excuse the accident of being taken in arms with the enemy. He shall have his pardon."

"It is your majesty's pleasure," replied the earl, with profound submission; "but

the pardon cannot change his nature,—it will only give a wider charter to his presumption."

"There is more heat in this, Lincoln," said the king, "than accords with exact justice. You are offended with the adventurer, as you call him, because he aspires to your daughter; nay, not to your daughter, but to the fairest ornament of all England. Now, in that I see no offence, but the proud prompting of a noble young heart, that hath not yet discerned how much the admiration which beauty breeds is contrary to etiquette. I will not refuse his pardon because he admires the Lady Blanche. Had he not, I should have questioned the bravery and high spirit which, with so much gallantry, sets him on to win his spurs."

"But if he is a party to the whole stratagem," said the earl, "and binds himself to the Jew's avarice that he may advance his fortune——"

"Nay, nay, my lord," exclaimed the king, "it is not fair to think ill of any man's motives,—especially of so young a man's; and one, too, who bears himself, as all allow, with so worthy a carriage."

"Your majesty," replied the earl gravely, "is disposed to give the young man preferment."

"I am," said the king calmly; "but upon merit. You have told me nothing to disparage his qualities as a gentleman on the vantage-ground of youth, with a fine person, and of singular grace in the courtesy of his deportment. That you should be averse to his pretence in addressing your daughter is natural enough; but in him it is no fault, my lord: on the contrary, it is the tribute which young admiration is well warranted to pay to such beauty, possessed of so much excellent virtue."

"I do not deny the merits of the young man," replied the earl; "but some consider-

ation belongs to Sir Amias de Crosby, than whom your majesty has no better subject: he is a man that all men esteem."

"I should have been better pleased with his character," said the king coldly, "had his friends stood less upon his virtues. But, my lord, let the inquiry take its course;—the witnesses from Florence will presently be here."

"They can but prove the marriage of the Lady Albertina with Lord Edmund of Rothelan," said the earl.

"You are resolved, Lincoln," replied the king, "to force me to become more the friend and patron of the young man than consists with the impartiality of my duties. I shall not knowingly allow him to be persecuted."

"Nor will your majesty," said the earl, with humility, "permit so good and so unblemished a man as Sir Amias de Crosby to sink under the devices of a Jew and an Ita-

lian woman, of whom no one can give any credible account."

"You are resolved, my lord," answered the king, with just so much of urbanity in his manner as served to temper the rebuke, "you are resolved to make me a party in this strange cause. I will not be so, however, my lord; and as to the treason in which this young man was found, I am sorry that his pardon hath not been already granted."

"But does your majesty mean that he may remain with Lord Mowbray in the court?"

"What I mean, my Lord of Lincoln, becomes not you to question," said the king with austerity; presently, however, he added, in a gayer tone,—"But the Lady Blanche is your own ward; and I doubt not, my lord, you can manage your own house without the king's help."

No more passed between them at that time; for at this junction of their discourse, the

Chronicler describes the entrance of the celebrated Countess of Salisbury, in remembrance of whose noble inspirations at Werk-castle, the banquetings and revelries were then held; and with his accustomed minuteness of detail, he gives a long description of her attire, in particular and quite as intelligible as a newspaper account of the body and train of a lady's modern court-dress. He then proceeds to say, that the king, on seeing her, turned from the Earl of Lincoln, and went towards the countess, entering into familiar discourse with her, much to the discomfort of Queen Philippa, who endured the sight till it was not in the power of womanhood to abide it longer.—Feigning to suffer from the close air of the hall, she suddenly retired into another chamber, followed by her ladies and the Bishop of Winchester, who had marked how her eyes travelled, and the rise and progress of a perturbation which she could not control.

The bishop silently signified to the ladies

to remain apart, and approaching her majesty, inquired with consolatory gentleness wherein she felt herself so indisposed.

"I am not well," replied Queen Philippa, "nor am I indeed ill. My heart aches more than my head. I could weep, but of what avail would be my tears? I wish I had not left the hall; let us return.—Shall we return?—The king is cheerful to-night, and my foolish absence may have disturbed his pleasure. But the heat, like a vapour, suddenly affected my brain. In sooth I am to blame for a weak part. Did you mark the good Lord Salisbury's wife?"

"I did," replied the bishop sedately, "and she is still the ornament of England."

"Indeed!" said the queen. "Now I think she is much faded. Many ladies are in the room with whom she cannot compare. She wears apace, my lord; but it is the course of nature, and she has passed her summer. She is herself conscious of this.

Did you observe how she is bejewelled, as if the light of her gems could make up for the lost lustre of her eyes?"

"But all her nobler graces," replied the prelate, "are unchanged; the imperishable beauty of her mind is still in its virgin bloom."

"I never," said the queen, "questioned that she is a very good woman. I have heard her much, indeed, commended for her alms; and the steeple, I dare say, does not chime more punctually the time of praying than she says her orisons. But, my lord, in all that there is no peculiar excellence."

"But few ladies, madam, are good so much for goodness, and saintly so much from piety, as the excellent Lady Salisbury."

"She hath the art, my lord, I see to win favour with the men."

"Madam, she hath the merit that deserves it."

"My lord, I do not disparage her merits;"

"But, alas, madam, you fear them."

"My lord, do you suspect I doubt her with the king? Meddle you no farther in this. It is blaming his majesty with unworthiness, and by implication to say that I have lost his affections.—But, O, my lord, why should I speak thus? these tears betray my own sad consciousness of the truth."

"Madam," said the bishop, after he had allowed her tears to flow for some time, "that his majesty has long, forgetful of his allegiance to you, sought the love of the Lady Salisbury, is an old tale, which even Scandal has almost tired herself to sleep in repeating. But it has for many years been marked by all sort of observers, that whatever his passion ever was, it is now a just and holy admiration, seeking its delight in the worship of her virtues."

The queen for some time made no answer, but, wiping the tear from her cheek, she laid her hand on the bishop's arm, and said—

"I have yielded myself too far to this weak jealousy. If in it I have committed any offence, I beseech you, my lord, to judge in mercy of my infirmity. I burn with anger at myself, and will, for the penance of so pettish a fault, do such homage to the worth of Lady Salisbury, as shall even make the king give to me some of that pure reverence which you tell me he pays to her."

"Thus," says the Chronicler, "might we see, by the emulation which so tempered and chastised the feminine jealousy of Queen Philippa, the high bearing of that great spirit, which in those days ruled and pervaded the thoughts of all bosoms then in England." But here, leaving his digression, it is meet that we relate what in the meantime was passing with the more immediate actors in our own drama.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SHIP.

The sun he sat on the golden wave
Of that silent summer sea;
And I saw a black spot rise on his face,
And I thought what that spot could be.
It was ne like the fisherman's boat
When it oars athwart the light;
But it was a thing like a coal-black steed,
With a rider thereon like a knight.
He had not a speare, but he had a spade,
And an hour-glass in his hand;
And day and night that voiceless wight
Rides over the sea and the land.

DEATH HIS GARLAND.

THOUGH the Lady Albertina, from the time when she first heard that witnesses had been found at Florence, and were embarked for London, felt as if the day had at last broken

upon the dark wilderness in which she had so long wandered, she yet could not divest her mind of fears and dismal presentiments. She counted the hours, as if her anxiety could have shortened the voyage. Every change of the wind shook her spirit; and she watched the waving of the boughs, and the motions of the chimney smoke, like a mariner's wife that hath her all upon the sea.

The royal festival at Windsor ended; the court returned to Westminster; and all the king's guests and the strangers went to their respective homes;—still nothing was heard of that unhappy vessel.

Adonijah, who was scarcely less anxious than his adopted daughter for the arrival of the ship, still endeavoured to sooth her, and to appease her apprehensions.

"You make," he would often say to her, "shutters of your fears, that keep out the morning light. Is not the sun rising to you with gladness on his forehead? And shall

not pleasant aspects all around you, more beautiful than the sparkling of dews, or the sweet singing of little birds?—O, you are as the sullen ash-tree, which reluctantly acknowledges the melodious dominion of the leafy spring!—Is not your son with you, a goodly cedar, towering in the green beauty of youth and strength;—I beseech you, my dear child, not to let such importunities for the coming of that slow black ship make you discomforted."

"But if she never come," replied the lady, "shall not my son but live to blush for his mother's shame?"

"There are winds in the skies," said Adonjah, "and there are waves in the seas; and the ship is a pitcher that a stone may break in pieces;—but what is not perishable?—The ship will come safe to land!—she cannot but come safe, my daughter, for Heaven itself hath a treasure needful to its own providence in her lading. It would be a guilty

thing to let that ship fall to the bottom of the sea."

"So do I often think," replied the Lady Albertina; "and in that thought I have hope; but still, at times, a strange fear darkens my spirit."

"You have dreams and visions, my child," said Adonijah; "and they pass over your spirit like the shadows of the clouds on the waters."

"Ah!" replied the melancholy lady, "but there are clouds which cast those shadows."

At last news were brought to Adonijah that the ship was seen in the river; and the Chronicler says, the story of Rothelan having become alehouse talk, the tidings of her approach caused a great movement in the town. Every man in London, who had heard of the lady's constancy and the Jew's friendship, desired to know the sequel, like a credulous child that is impatient for the retribution at the end of a tragic tale. But "there was,"

he observes, "at this time a great thirst for strange matter among the people, the hectic of which, some of those who were astrological ascribed to malign aspects of the stars, and other signs and omens, which daily bore visible testimony to the credibility of certain baleful predictions and pestiferous prophecies, wherewith the whole of Christendom was then much troubled. The trees untimely budded, and brought forth unknown fruit, of which no lip could abide the taste;—the ivy slackened her ancient hold of the wall, and shot out branches that bore wonderful leaves;—great fishes were heard in the night moaning afar off in the sea; and there was a shower of worms. For an entire month the moon was not seen, and the nights were so dark, that it was feared she had wandered away from her sphere. A holy man seven times saw a mighty hand between him and the setting sun, and it held a great sand-glass run out, which was believed to be a token that the end

of time was come. The sun itself grew dim and ineffectual;—an eclipse overcame it like an eyelid, and there was a cry that his light was going out. A fiery star appeared in Orion, and many thought it was the torch of the angel of the Judgment coming to burn the world. The earth trembled, and vast vestments, with the dark outlines of terrible forms, were seen hurrying to and fro in the skies; and a woman-child was born with two tongues."

Indeed, all historians agree, that, at this epoch, portents and prodigies became so rife, and yet continued so wonderful, that many thought and feared some new evil was confusing the germins of nature. The minds of all sorts of men were in consequence excited to a state of wild and boding expectancy; insomuch, that every new thing, to which aught of interest or curiosity attached, was magnified into something mystical and marvellous. Thus it happened, that the gates of

the vessel with the Florentines, though in itself an incident of no seeming importance, is described as having been caught by the multitude as an event by which the destinies of the kingdom were to be affected. Thousands on thousands passed to the shores of the river to see her come; and boats went to meet her, as if she had been bringing home to them all the freightage of some great change in their fortunes.

The Lady Albertina, with Rothelan and Adonijah, were among the first who hastened to greet her arrival, and they stood together at a window to see her pass to the moorings at London bridge.

"It is strange," said the lady, "and what can it portend, that none of the boats go close to her, but all you see suddenly suspend their oars as they approach her?"

"She hath had a hard voyage," rejoined Rothelan; "look how dishevelled she is in the cordage. Some of her top-sails too are hang-

ing in rags; and I can see, as it were, strips of green moss down the seams of the others. They have surely been long unhanded."

Adonijah continued looking towards the ship, and appeared thoughtful and touched with care, as he said—

"Her voyage hath been very long—all the way from the land of Egypt,—but she was in Italy as she came, and her course hath been in the sunny days and with the gracious gales of the summer; yet is she like a thing of antiquity, for those signs of waste and decay are as if Oblivion were on board. They have not come of the winds nor of the waves."

"The crowd on the shores," added the lady, "grows silent as she passes."

"There are many persons abroad," said Rothelan.

"Yes," replied Adonijah, "but only the man at the helm hath for some time moved; all the others are in idleness—still, still.—A

cold fear is crawling on my bones, to see so many persons, and every one monumental."

"Some of those who are looking over the side," said Rothelan, partaking in some degree of the Jew's dread, "droop their heads upon their breasts, and take no heed of any object. Look at those on the deck; they sit as if they were indeed marble, resting on their elbows like effigies on a tomb."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried the Lady Albertina, "what horror does she bring?"

At that moment the boats assembled around the ship suddenly made rapidly for the shore —many of the watermen stayed not till they reached the landings, but leaped into the river; then a universal cry arose, and the people were seen scattering themselves in all directions. Rothelan darted from his mother's side, and ran towards the spot, to which, instead of holding onward to the moorings, it was evident the vessel was steering to take the ground.

In his way thither he met his old friends, Sir Gabriel de Glowr and his lady, who, at his request, were still remaining in London. They, too, had been among the spectators, and were hurrying from the scene. The lady was breathless with haste and fear, her mantle was torn, and she had lost a shoe in her flight.

The Baron of Falaside, before Rothelan could inquire the cause of so singular a panic, looked at him wildly, and shook his hand, dragging his lady away by the arm.

"Stop!" exclaimed Rothelan, "and tell me what is the cause of all this?" But they would not stop. He also addressed himself to others with no better success. "Turn back, come back," every one said to him as he rushed against the stream of the crowd.

The pressure and tide of the multitude slackened as he advanced; and when he was within a short distance of the place where the ship had in the meantime taken the

ground, he found himself alone. He paused for a moment; as yet he saw nothing to alarm, but only the man at the helm, who, the instant that the ship touched the ground, had leaped on shore, and was coming towards him.

Rothelan ran forward to meet him, in order to inquire how it was that all on board appeared so motionless; but scarcely had he advanced ten paces, when, casting his eyes forward, he saw that each of those who were leaning over the vessel's side, and resting on the deck, were dead men, from whose hideous anatomy the skin had peeled and the flesh had fallen. They had all died of the plague.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FORERUNNER.

And when I went to my true love's bed,
And thought to clasp her to my breast,
I found a cold and a clammy corpse,
In a winding-sheet and cearments dress'd.

THE PALMER'S LAMENT.

"THE first sense," says our author, "that a man has of the better part of his life being over, and the afternoon of his day come, is a consciousness of the matter of his hopes being exhausted. He may continue in the cheerful participation of all habitual pleasantries, seem mirthful to his companions, and still taste with relish his accustomed enjoyments; but a cold inward pressure, which resolution cannot remove, makes him to feel

that the spring of his life hath spent its elasticity, and can neither prompt to adventure, repel care, nor sustain adversity, without crouching."

It may have been so in the days of Edmund the Third; but we have a notion, that in the felicitous epoch of George the Fourth, the first sense a man has in England of having exhausted hope and endeavour—his first persuasion that the chances of time and fortune are beginning to be against him, is manifested by effecting an insurance on his life. It is not, however, our intention to descant on this subject; the remark has only accidentally occurred to us, by reflecting on what the consequences would have been to the insurance offices, when the plague was an occasional visitor in London, had it been then as much the practice as it is now, to underwrite on lives. Perhaps, if the subject were philosophically examined, it might be discovered that the custom of making life-insurance is a great

cause of the present salubrious state of the metropolis; at least, we are inclined to suspect, that although it is obviously for the benefit of a man's family that he should die as soon as possible after he has insured his life, both he and they became doubly careful of his preservation. But, however much this may be the case at present, the feelings which inspire that additional domestic solicitude had neither place, principle, nor influence, in the period of which we are speaking, otherwise many of the dismal things related by the Chronicler of the pestilence imported in the slow black ship, that brought the dead witnesses, never certainly could have come to pass.

The first effect which he mentions of that fatal arrival, is the impression which the news made on Sir Anmer de Crosby, when informed by Ralph Hanslap that the vessel was come.

"Come, is she?" said the worthy Knight, "are they all come, Hanslap?"

"How many, and whether they are all that

might have come, I know not, but I saw a great number on board," replied the cool deliberate and methodical familiar.

Sir Amias, without answering, sat down; for he was standing in his chamber when Ralph Hanslap brought him the news. He appeared for some time plunged in thought, and fetched his breath with labour and suffering; at last he said—

"Shall we go to France?"

"No" was the brief reply, accompanied with one of those dark, penetrating, and peculiar looks of that unsocial and mysterious being.

"You grow strange, Hanslap," said the knight; "you know that these witnesses will prove my ruin."

"Then the Lady Albertina was indeed the wife of Lord Edmund?"

"What mean you, Hanslap? You know all that I know," replied Sir Amias.

"Is it?" said Ralph Hanslap, "and he

added in a freer accent, "but you have nothing to dread from the Florentines."

"How so? What have you heard? Have you spoken to them?" cried the knight eagerly.

"No" was the emphatic answer.

"How then have I nothing to fear?"

"They are all dead."

"Dead! Hanslap—explain to me—how dead?"

"They were all lying dead in the ship. They have died on the voyage."

A momentary glow of guilty exultation was felt by Sir Amias; but it was instantaneously succeeded by a freezing horror when Ralph Hanslap added, in a deep, sullen, cavernous accent—

"I saw three of them."

"Did you not say they were all dead?"

"They were three witnesses of that fact. I saw them looking over the ship's side."

"Do not juggle with me, Hanslap."

"They were indeed; and they had no

more flesh on the bones of their faces than the skulls of the traitors over the gates of the Tower."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Sir Amias; "but tell me more."

"They died of the plague; that's all I have heard about them."

Sir Amias rose hastily, and walked several times across the floor, moving his lips quickly, as if he had swallowed some nauseating drug, of which he was anxious to get rid of the taste.

"Surely," said he at last, "a vessel so infected will not be permitted to land her crew."

"I do not think," replied the squire calmly, "that the dead men have made any declarations, so suddenly it would seem has been their death."

"I am not thinking of their evidence," exclaimed Sir Amias, with something like the vehemence of indignation. "I am alarmed

for the town. What will that frantic woman say, and those who have abetted her, if the plague is brought into London?"

"They will say it has been occasioned by what you have done," replied Ralph Hanslap.

The words were as a thunder-stroke to Sir Amias. His agitation was arrested, he became wan, his head shook as with a slight palsy, and he appeared the most abject and forlorn thing to which terror and remorse could degrade the goodly presence of a man who bore himself with a carriage of no common dignity.

"But you will now," continued the pitiless torturer, "have unmolested possession of your manors. The lady will never now be able to prove either her marriage or the legitimacy of her son."

Sir Amias looked at him with amazement approaching to horror, and exclaimed—

"In God's name, what are you?"

"A man," replied Ralph Hanslap, "an indifferently honest one."

"Is it not possible," cried the knight, somewhat recovering his self-possession, "to get that dreadful ship sent back to sea? I will give all I possess to get her away, for I dread to think of the calamity she may have brought."

"She is destroyed," said Hanslap, in his ordinary manner; "she had scarcely touched the ground, when your nephew and myself,—we were the only persons near her, and he was there before me,—got firebrands, and threw them aboard:—she is burnt, with all her lading."

"But those on board?"

Ralph Hanslap did not promptly answer the question, but looked steadily for a moment at the knight, and then said slowly—

"They were all burnt with her; I saw the fire strip the clothes off the skeletons, they stood among the flames like souls in purga-

tory. I heard the crackling of their burning bones."

Sir Amias covered his face with his hands, as he exclaimed—

"What shall not I have to answer for! but did you burn the living with the dead?"

"There were none living. One man brought in the vessel, and he had leaped on shore."

"Where is he?—Surely all intercourse with him is forbidden?

"He has fled no one knows whither."

"He should have been instantly put to death."

"There have been murders enow already."

"Devil! spare me!" cried Sir Amias, with the acutest voice of agony and wretchedness.

At that moment the sound of a gathering tumult in the street was heard, and a dismal shouting and rushing of people. Sir Amias involuntarily looked out at the window which was open, and beheld a sailor coming wildly

along in the midst, as it were, of a whirlwind of stones. He tried for admission at several doors in vain; and, being refused, was making for the gates of Crosby-house.—"Keep him out! keep him out! kill him!" was the universal cry. The porter shut the gates in his face, and he fell opposite to the window at which Sir Amias and Ralph Hanslap were standing, and almost in the same moment he was buried in a shower of earth and stones.

END OF VOLUME II.

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